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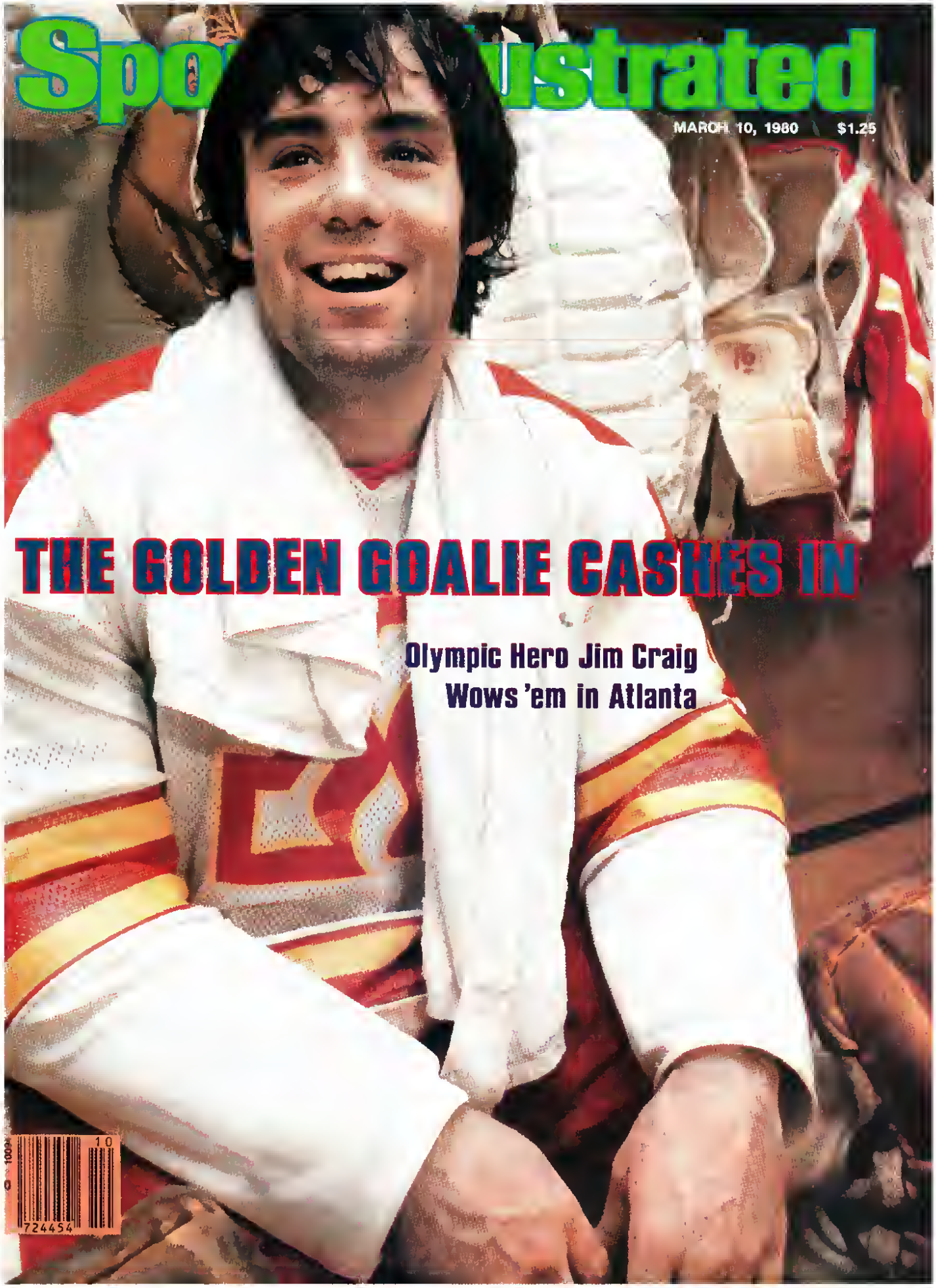

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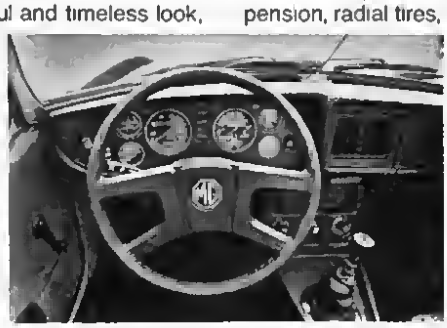

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Next Week

HOOP HEAVEN, the NCAA tournament, opens its portals to 48 teams in a frantic week of action that will reduce that record number to 16. Curry Kirkpatrick assesses the survivors and predicts which of them will make it all the way to the final four.

WELL EAST OF EDEN by now, Eve suddenly has muscles. Women's bodybuilding has arrived, and, as Dan Levin reports, the ladies know just what they're doing, but a lot of gym owners, promoters and, above all, judges don't have the slightest clue.

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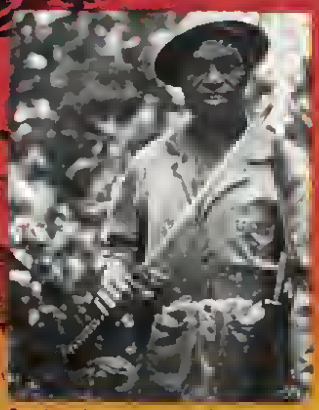

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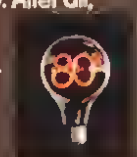

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ON CHANGING THE ENDING

Muhammad Ali is talking, apparently seriously, about coming out of retirement to challenge John Tate next summer for the World Boxing Association heavyweight title. If Ali were to dethrone Tate, it would be the fourth time he would have worn the crown, a prospect that pleases him almost as much as the envisioned $6 million payday, which he could use to support his free-spending ways. But at 38 and with his once-splendid skills doubtlessly further eroded by his 18-month layoff, Ali would be courting danger by returning to the ring.

Ali absorbed heavy punishment in each of his three bouts with Joe Frazier, as well as in his fights with Ken Norton in 1976 and with Earnie Shavers in 1977. Friends detect a slight slur in his speech and a raspiness that might have been caused by blows to the throat. "I don't want to end up like Joe Louis," Ali himself said last year—regrettably, to a Las Vegas audience that included Louis, who has suffered a stroke—and much the same thought occurs to Dr. Ferdie Pacheco, Ali's former physician, who urged him to retire as far back as 1976. "With any older fighter, the strain and trauma of the ring will accelerate the deterioration of the kidneys, liver, heart and brain," Pacheco told SI's Paula Phelps last week. "Ali should never, never, never fight again. If he keeps putting new endings on his story, one of them is going to be tragic."

THEY KNOW YOU, AL

The Oakland Raiders have signed an agreement to play next season in the Los Angeles Coliseum, greatly distressing fans in Oakland, where the team has sold out regularly for the past 11 years. Al Davis, the Raiders' managing general partner, says he decided to move his club because the commission that runs the Oakland Coliseum was slow to give him the luxury boxes and other improvements the L.A. Coliseum has offered. Davis says these improvements include creature comforts that the modern fan demands. "I believe professional football in the '80s must have a stadium that's comfortable," he argues.

But Oakland fans gave every evidence of supporting their team without some of those supposedly essential creature comforts. And whatever its negotiating posture earlier, the Oakland commission had considerably sweetened its offer lately. Davis' decision to move anyway heightens suspicions that what he really has in mind are the pay-television riches that could very well await him in L.A.

The Raiders' move southward is being resisted in the courts by 1) the NFL, which is upset that Davis didn't bother to get the approval of 21 clubs as required by the league constitution in the case of franchise shifts, 2) a Los Angeles taxpayer who considers the L.A. Coliseum's $17 million offer a misappropriation of public funds, and 3) the city of Oakland, which has started eminent domain proceedings calculated to block any move by the team that local bumper stickers refer to, with justification, as the Oakland Traitors.

THE UBIQUITOUS DIGIT

Uncle Sam uses his index finger to let it be known that he wants *you*, and others employ the same digit to scold their kids and issue directions. But the finger that Anglo-Saxons called "towcher" and schoolchildren refer to as "pointer" is proving to be especially valuable these days to athletes who insist on holding it aloft after victories. How else can they tell the world they're No. 1?

Well, maybe they could let the world decide for itself. It's probably forgivable that members of the U.S. Olympic hockey team flashed the No. 1 sign after receiving their gold medals at Lake Placid—at least they *are* No. 1—but many an athlete who thrusts his index finger skyward is being presumptuous. Take the USC and Houston football players who gave the No. 1 sign following their Rose and Cotton Bowl victories, respectively. Inasmuch as Alabama won the national championship, what those Trojan and Cougar players actually were doing was some not-very-discreet—and notably unsuccessful—lobbying.

Perhaps it's time to recall what the humorist H. Allen Smith said about the index finger. In his essay *A Short History of Fingers*, Smith noted that in bygone days, Europeans considered the index finger to be poisonous and felt that "if it were used to touch a wound, that wound would never heal. It was loaded with toxins, hence they always kept it well away from their soup."

DANGER: FIDO AHEAD

When menaced by dogs, a bane of their existence, some runners aren't bashful about responding with force. They think

nothing of swinging or kicking at small mutts and they fend off larger ones with Mace, sticks and belts. In *The Complete Book of Running*, James Fixx has proposed a less violent but nevertheless extreme strategy. "When the dog is nearly upon you, turn, make a blood-curdling noise and flail your arms as if demented," he writes. "Even a dog seriously bent on mischief will think twice about pursuing a relationship with so unpredictable a soul."

Now comes Dr. George Sheehan, the running cardiologist and author, to counsel a calmer approach. In a weekly column on running that appears in *The Daily Register* in Shrewsbury, N.J. and in several other newspapers, Sheehan advises runners to give dogs the widest pos-

continued

sible berth. "Keep away from the dog's territory," he writes. "Cross the road to avoid a dog up ahead. Pick up a convenient branch or stone or bottle to brandish. And if all this fails, face the dog (never try to outrun one) and keep talking until the animal cools off."

Sheehan says that he has never been bitten by a dog while running, which may have something to do with the fact that he seldom ventures near residential developments. "Owners of dogs in developments tend to let their dogs loose," he says. Surprisingly, Sheehan sees the automobile, another supposed nemesis of runners, as a potential ally against dogs. He says streets with automobile traffic are "safer for the runner because they are dangerous for dogs, and the owners are more likely to tie them up."

WHY IT'S NOT CALLED A GIRLCOTT

Although male runners compete in the Olympics in the 5,000, 10,000 and marathon, the all-male International Olympic Committee has yet to approve a race for women longer than 1,500 meters. Understandably unhappy about this, women distance runners were only partly appeased last fall when the world track and field federation, the IAAF, announced that it would stage world championships for women in the 3,000 meters and another non-Olympic event, the 400-meter hurdles, in August of this year in the Netherlands. But those two events would be little more than an afterthought to the Moscow Olympics, which are scheduled to conclude barely a week earlier.

Thanks to the Olympic boycott movement, though, these stepchildren may yet pull a Cinderella. The boycott would seriously reduce the caliber of competition in Moscow just as a "counter-Olympics" would be diminished by the almost certain absence of Soviet-bloc competitors. Because the two isolated world-championship events in the Netherlands presumably will attract athletes from both sides, they could, ironically, end up as the most glamorous events on this year's track calendar.

TRIPLE THREAT, 1980-STYLE

There was a new development last week in college sport's malodorous academic transcript scandal. The Los Angeles Community College District asked the FBI and local officials to investigate transcript improprieties at its 10 schools and announced its own inquiry into evidence of "dual and triple enrollments in classes held at the same time." Forged transfer credits from one of the schools, Los Angeles Valley College, had previously turned up on transcripts of athletes at Oregon and UCLA. Dr. Alice Thurston, L.A. Valley's president, says that at least eight athletes at her college had received credit for different courses offered at the same hour. Asked how this was possible, Thurston said wearily, "You'd have to be creative about it. Like you jog through the swimming pool with a tennis racket in your hand. That way you could get credit for jogging, swimming and tennis."

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

Not counting the decathlon, there are 20 individual Olympic men's track and field events, and the best-ever performances in five of them occurred on Wednesdays. Four best-ever performances took place on Fridays, four on Saturdays, four on Sundays, two on Mondays and one on a Thursday. And, oh yes, Sebastian Coe's world record of 3:49 in the mile, the most celebrated non-Olympic event, was set on a Tuesday.

This information comes courtesy of Columbia University law student Jed Brickner, a track and field nut who realized a while ago that he could fill a rare and, to him, unpardonable gap in the statistical esoterica that attends the sport by analyzing top performances in men's track events on the basis of which days of the week they occurred. Brickner's research consumed "hundreds of hours" ("Lawyers are trained to keep track of their time—that's how they bill," he says cheerfully) and yielded such tidbits as the fact that Brazil's versatile Joao Carlos de Oliveira not only set his world record in the triple jump on a Wednesday but also boasts the best distance ever achieved in that event on a Saturday as well as the best long jumps anybody has ever accomplished on either a Monday or a Saturday. And while West Germany's Karl-Hans Riehm has recorded the longest hammer throws in history on a Sunday, a Monday and a Tuesday, the "records" for each of the remaining days of the week belong to others. Brickner also has come up with the startling—some, admittedly, might say startlingly trivial—fact that only one athlete holds the record in his specialty for every day of the week. His identity will be divulged in this space next week.

SLIGHTLY MACHIAVELLIAN

Until last year baseball owners more than held their own in salary arbitration with their players. Under the rules, each side submits a salary figure, one of which is then selected by the arbitrator, no compromise allowed. After arbitration went into effect in 1974, owners won 32 of the first 53 cases, including seven of nine in 1978. But players won eight of 14 cases a year ago and 15 of 26 this year, easily the most noteworthy award being the one given last week to Chicago Cub Relief Pitcher Dave Sutter. The Cubs submitted an offer of $350,000, but the arbitrator opted instead for Sutter's formidable figure of $700,000.

Why are players now winning a majority of arbitration awards—and for such enormous sums? Arbitrators obviously have been influenced by the huge salaries some owners have *voluntarily* been paying their players, for example, Nolan Ryan's much-publicized million dollars a year. But it also appears that some clubs may have submitted intentionally low figures, all but assuring that they would lose in arbitration. The thinking is that while this may cost them more money than if they had made more realistic offers, they thus avoid setting precedents that might be invoked by other team members. Detroit General Manager Jim Campbell, for one, says that he followed this slightly Machiavellian strategy in offering $105,000 to Second Baseman Lou Whitaker, whose $130,000 demand was granted by an arbitrator.

"If I gave him what he wanted, what would Morris and Parrish say?" Campbell asks, referring to two other Tiger players who had already agreed to terms that presumably were less favorable than Whitaker's. "So I let them blame the arbitrator."

THEY SAID IT

• Billy Paultz, on the adjustment he had to make after being traded from the San Antonio Spurs to his new team, the Houston Rockets: "The warmup pants here have snaps. That's more complicated than the offense."

• George Raveling, Washington State basketball coach, one of the few blacks coaching a major college team: "When the athletic director said I should recruit more white players to keep the folks in Pullman happy, I signed Rufus White and Willie White." **END**

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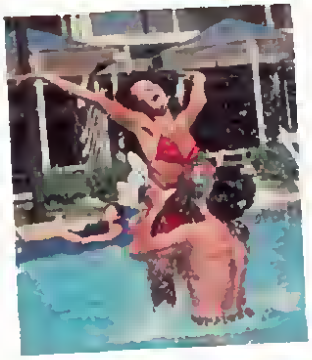

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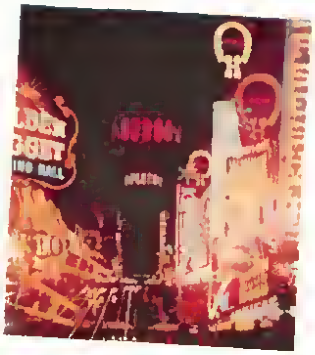

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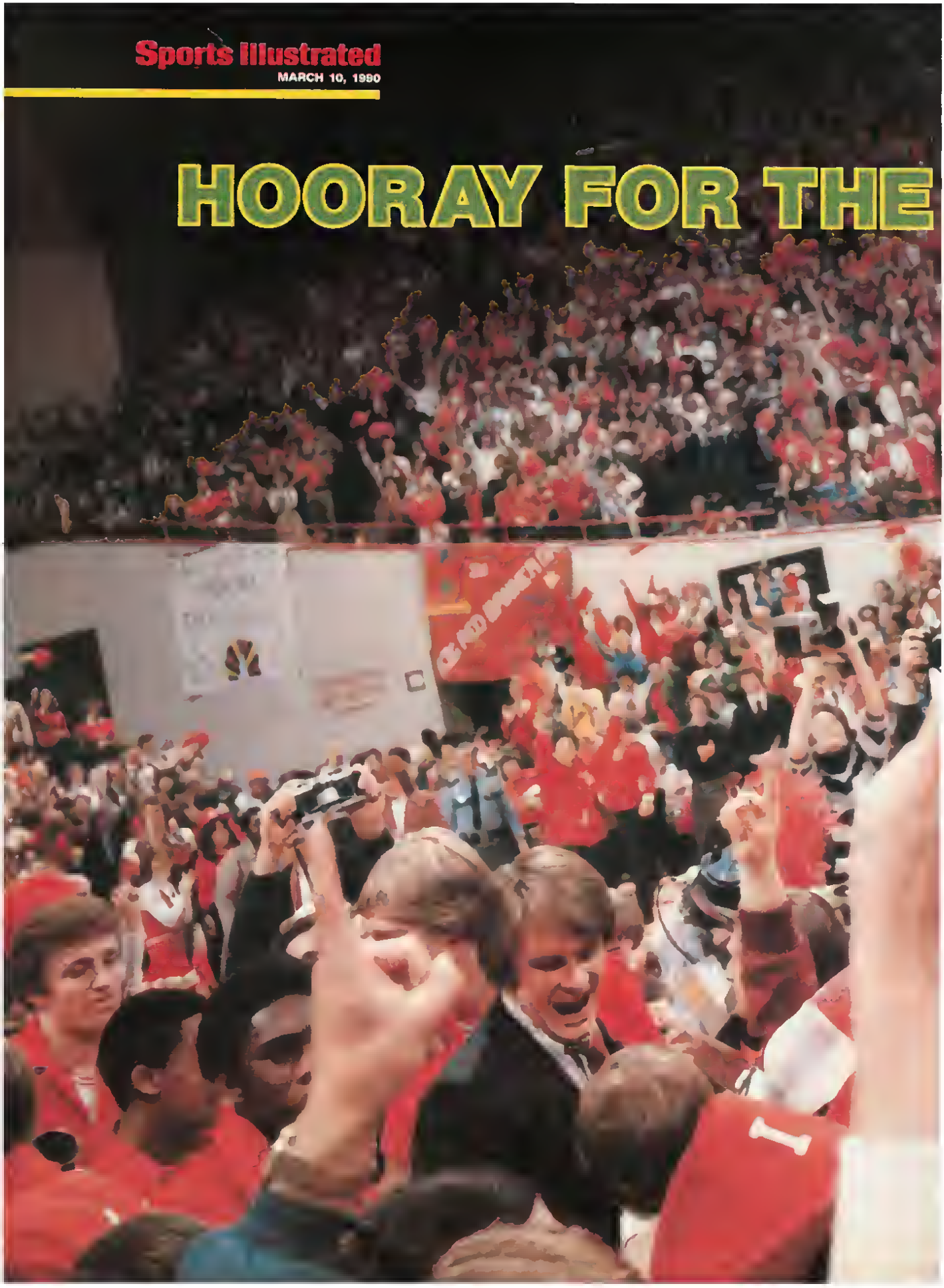
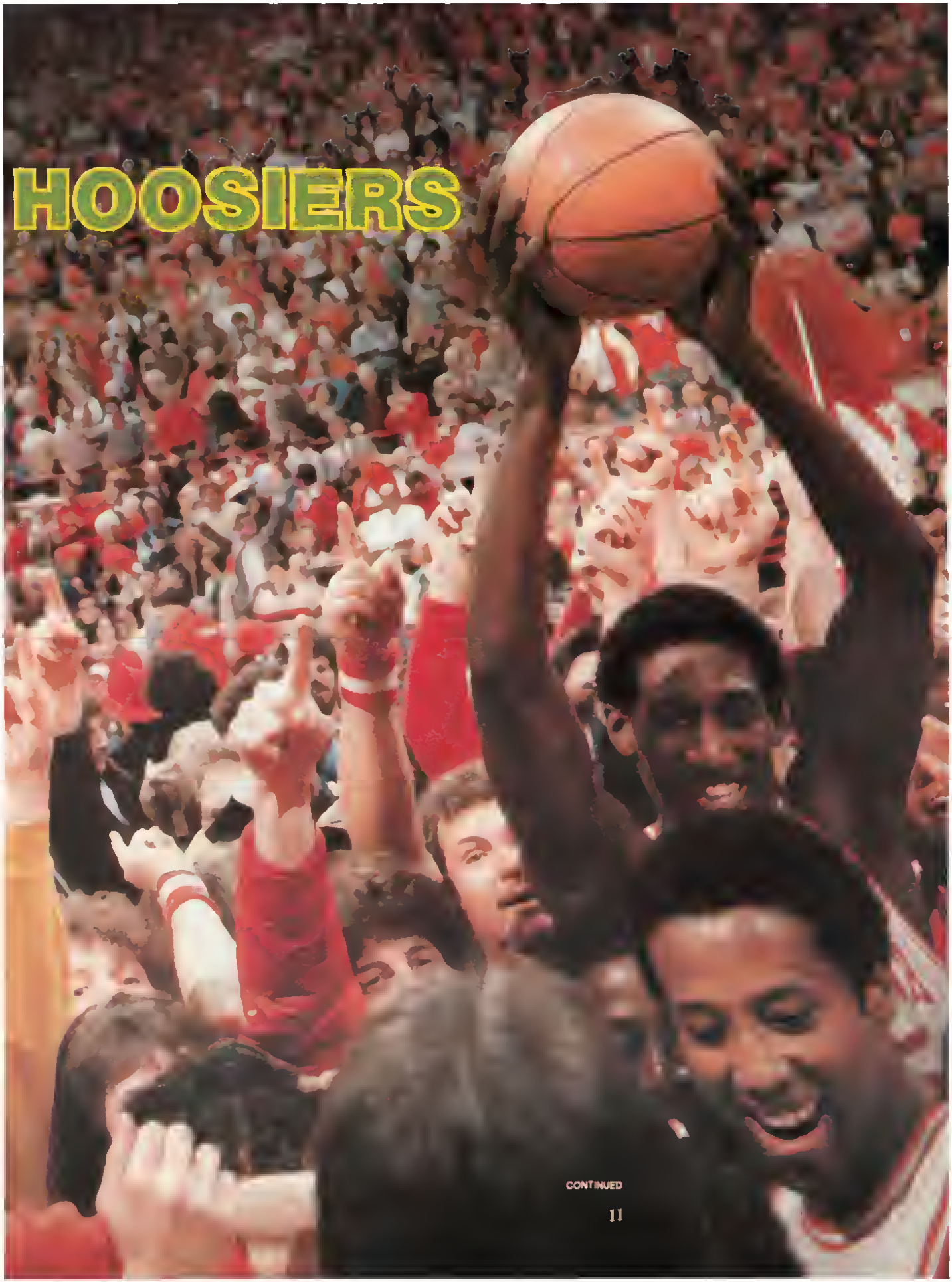




CONTINUED

Holding the ball aloft, Ray Tolbert and his Indiana teammates walked off with the Big Ten crown by beating Ohio State

by CURRY KIRKPATRICK

When the Big Ten season began two months ago he was on the bench in street clothes watching his Indiana teammates scratch and scramble and ultimately fall to Ohio State. When the season ended last Sunday afternoon he was on hand again. Only this time senior Mike Woodson—Marvelous Mike, Miracle Mike, *Mr. Mike* to all those Buckeyes through whose monster of a zone defense he had just finished cutting a swath as wide as all the snowy outdoors—had come dressed for the dance.

What Woodson had done was score 21 points and, even more important, wear down Ohio State with patience and penetration. What his classmate, Butch Carter, had done was contribute two game-saving free throws in regulation, then a steal and two game-*winning* free throws in overtime. What the Hoosiers had done was win the game 76–73, the cherished Big Ten championship and an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament. Welcome home, Mr. Mike.

In truth, Woodson had made an improbable recovery from back surgery and returned to the Hoosier lineup five games earlier, scoring 102 points in an Indiana streak that brought the Hoosiers to this long-anticipated showdown with their archrival. But it took a pressure-cooker of a conference finale involving two teams tied with 12–5 league records for Woodson's versatility and value to become fully apparent.

The 6′5″ guard-forward-anything-else-you-want is Arthur Ashe on a basketball court: smart, subtle, stylish. When Ohio State appeared to be pulling away—it had a 59–51 lead with 7:38 to go—Woodson slithered into a seam in the defense, made two baskets, missed a shot but then made another, at which point the entire Buckeye team started gathering in his vicinity. That freed Indiana's quicksilver freshman guard, Isiah Thomas, who ultimately contributed 21 points, as well as 10 rebounds and seven assists. So Thomas drove the lane and was fouled. When he converted his free throws the score was tied, 63–63.

Clark Kellogg's unreal triple-pump basket through heavy traffic—which would have seemed more unreal had the precocious freshman not been providing 18 points and 16 rebounds worth of similar stuff that afternoon—gave the lead back to the Buckeyes with 47 seconds to go. Now Indiana patiently set up for the tying goal. The Hoosiers nearly waited too long.

Center Ray Tolbert plunged inside but the Buckeyes' Herb Williams blocked the shot. It was the longshoremen's, uh, Buckeyes' *eighth* such intimidating rejection of the game, and they were ready for another when Carter came up with the ball in the key amid vast confusion. Instead, Williams committed his fifth and disqualifying foul before Carter could attempt the shot.

Seven seconds were left when Carter went to the line for his free throws. Ohio State's guards came over to say hello. Kelvin Ransey even reached out to shake Carter's hand and then patted him on the fanny.

"I was thinking of all the loose-ball drills and all the running I did last summer," Carter said. It would have been a long spring if he hadn't made both ends and saved the game. For the moment.

Ransey, who had 17 points and seven assists, and Kellogg both had chances to win it for Ohio State, but Ransey's attempt bounced off the rim while Kellogg's never reached it. Which left only the overtime, or what Indiana Coach Bobby Knight called "situation fun time."

It was a barrel of laughs for the Hoosiers, mainly because Tolbert hit from 10 feet and because Carter stripped Ransey and fed Thomas for a breakaway to push Indiana ahead 69–65. Kellogg countered with a pair of free throws with 4:06 remaining, but the Hoosiers then held the ball for more than three minutes and the desperate Buckeyes now had to start fouling.

Woodson, stationed at the point, skillfully used the clock, positioned his teammates and moved the ball to the right people. After Ransey's baseline jumper brought OSU to 72–71 with 25 seconds to go, the right person was again Carter, who placidly converted two more free throws to put the game and the championship out of reach.

As soon as Woodson recovered, Indiana did, too

"I really worried that I'd never play again," Woodson said at the emotional post-game celebrations on the Assembly Hall court. "I sure didn't think I'd make it this far."

On Feb. 14 Woodson made his astonishing return, a night that proved to be hearts and flowers—but not valentines—for the rest of the Big Ten. It was right there in River City—make that Iowa City—that it happened. Barely a minute into the game. Right side, breaking at an angle off a screen. Woodson jumped and shot. Good. He jumped in the air again, clapped his hands and thought, joyfully, "I've still got the touch."

And he surely did. After being written

off for the season because of back surgery; after spending weeks in intensive rehabilitation, including many hours strapped in flotation gear that allowed him to "run" in the deep end of the university's Royer Pool; after missing 15 games, six of which the Hoosiers lost, Woodson was back. Starting at guard in that season-turning game at Iowa, Woodson played 39 minutes, made seven of 18 from the field, added four free throws and got five rebounds as Indiana won 66–55. Starting at forward against Minnesota at home, Woodson scored 24 points and had five assists in a 67–54 victory as his mother, Odessa, sat in the stands and wept. "I've prayed enough," she said. "I prayed until my knees wore out. Mike's a miracle man."

Actually, before his brave comeback Woodson's back ailment had taken the measure of more than the player himself. The pains began in early November after Woodson fell on his back in practice. He kept icing the injured area and was able to open the season and play the first six games. But, says Woodson, "when I'd sit down and cool off, it got stiff. I had trouble bending over."

Dr. Merrill Ritter, an Indianapolis orthopedist, put himself in Knight's doghouse—which annually appears to grow into a veritable pound—by at first diagnosing the injury as back spasms. Dr. John Miller, the Indiana team doctor, was replaced because Knight felt he was slow to grasp the severity of the injury.

A third physician, Dr. Henry Feuer, a neurosurgeon, was consulted after Woodson felt "a tingle" in his left calf before the Dec. 18 game against Toledo. When Feuer prescribed rest, Woodson took to bed at Knight's house for four days during the week before Christmas. That didn't do the trick, and on Dec. 27 he underwent surgery for a herniated disc.

"We were able to make a one-inch incision instead of the normal three or four inches," says Feuer. "We had Mike walking and exercising and running in the water the first week. When we brought him along twice as fast as normal, we realized we were doing something that hadn't been done before."

Normal recovery time is three to six months. Woodson was playing basketball again within six weeks. Knight even had his Lazarus suit up against Illinois on Jan. 31. "I wanted to see someone on the floor in our uniform who could shoot," Knight said, only half-jokingly.

But the master psychologist had not been idle while waiting for Woodson. Using as many as a dozen different lineups, shuttling Carter between forward and guard, "tigering up" his big men, Landon Turner and Tolbert, to play clawing defense, Knight manipulated his troops into striking position. Even when Indiana's charismatic leader, Thomas, cracked open his face in a game and then had it cracked open again during a fight in his dormitory (total damage: 24 stitches and eyes so puffed he resembled a black Carmen Basilio), the Hoosiers kept plugging away.

Last week, with only one game remaining before his team's day of destiny with Ohio State, Knight committed a blunder: he over-practiced the Hoosiers. Against Wisconsin last Thursday night Indiana was flat and fell behind 44–41 with 7:20 left in the game. "We were three strokes ahead of the shark and the shark almost got us," Knight said.

But one after another, the Badger starters fouled out, until Wisconsin had nobody left to combat the Hoosiers. Indiana scored only six baskets in the second half but made 25 of 28 from the line (16 by Woodson and Thomas). The Hoosiers won 61–52, setting up the Ohio State showdown.

It was not exactly astonishing that Indiana and Ohio State should be meeting for the title, the Hoosiers and Buckeyes being the Steelers and Oilers of college basketball in a league that is reminiscent of the AFC Central. The two schools have won four of the Big Ten's six NCAA championships, and they have accounted for 12 of the conference's 24 appearances in the NCAA final four.

Respect is mutual, of course, as is the long-standing, frenzied desire of each to whomp the other. Ohio State Coach Eldon Miller has the added incentive of wanting to crush the mystique of Knight, the sport's most feared tactician. To Indiana's volatile genius the rivalry means even more; surely it is burned deep within his soul.

Knight was born in Ohio. He played for Ohio State. One of Knight's greatest non-military, father-figure heroes is Fred Taylor, who was the coach at Ohio State for 18 years. In 1977, when Taylor was shoved into the physical education department without so much as a ceremonial farewell, an angry Knight produced his own Taylor tribute at Indiana. When some of OSU's influential boosters arranged a meeting with Knight to talk about the Buckeye coaching position and the Ohio State athletic director didn't even bother to show up, a steaming Knight got even angrier. Thus he likes nothing better than to beat Ohio State, which he had done in six of the last seven games, including the 1979 NIT semifinals.

And so he did again, thanks to Woodson. Of course, this whole thing may be preordained. Woodson's hometown is Indianapolis. The last game he played before his injury was in Market Square Arena, site of the NCAA finals. And his birthday is March 24, the date of the NCAA championship game. Welcome home again, Mr. Mike. **END**

Bobby Knight was the cat, Ohio State the canary

Craig, nervelessly reaching up to grab a deflection, stopped the NHL's Colorado Rockies about as easily as he had halted the vaunted Soviets at Lake Placid

THE FLAME IS STILL BURNING BRIGHTLY

Georgians suddenly turned on to the alien sport of hockey last week, giving a lavish welcome to Olympic Goalie Jim Craig, whose pro debut with the Atlanta Flames was a rousing success, on and off the ice **by KATHY BLUMENSTOCK**

If anytime soon Jim Craig does one of those credit-card TV commercials that begins "Do you know me?" the viewers will drown out the message by yelling "Yes!" loud and clear. Right now Craig, the goaltender who beat the world at Lake Placid, is as familiar as the kid next door and more American than a Chevrolet full of apple pies. Most recently seen draped in Old Glory and a gold medal, Craig made his NHL debut last Saturday night in Atlanta in a blaze of publicity. And it was fitting that Craig, whose week had been one parade and one standing ovation after another, wore No. 1 for the Flames and beat the Colorado Rockies 4–1 before Atlanta's first sellout crowd (15,156) of the season.

"I'm more at home on the ice than with all of this," Craig said after the game, gesturing at a locker room full of media people. "At first I wasn't keen on the idea of beginning in the NHL so soon, but now I'm glad I did. That's one 'W' beside my name." En route to getting the W, Craig stopped 24 shots, including more than a few of the high, hard ones that tend to stun the uninitiated. But Craig clutched, scrambled and hung on, and each save was greeted by approving roars from flag-waving fans and a few bars of *Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious* on the organ.

Craig hoped the game in Atlanta marked the end of a three-week-long whirlwind that left him gasping for air—though, in several ways, richer for the experience. During the days preceding his auspicious entry into the NHL, he had been pelted with the equivalent of 300 shots on goal a minute, and he handled the barrage with great poise. "After we beat Finland to win the gold medal, we were all drained," Craig says. "But how could we relax? We had to be at the White House the next day. So I had four beers and went to bed."

Indeed, it was lunch in the East Room with Jimmy and Rosalynn on Monday and then a quick goodby to Olympic teammates before flying to New York

for a Tuesday morning TV appearance. It was on that trip that Craig discovered he was no longer anonymous. "The plane was packed with businessmen, and when I got on, they all stood and applauded," he says. "Then they were offering me limousines to take me around New York. It was unbelievable."

After an interview on *Good Morning, America*, Craig flew to Massachusetts, where a fleet of limos and motorcycle cops escorted him from Boston's Logan airport to a tumultuous welcome at his home in North Easton. That night Craig and the three other former Boston University players who skated for the Olympic team—Mike Eruzione, Jack O'Callahan and Dave Silk—attended the BU-RPI game and were given gold watches for their Lake Placid heroics. "Nobody paid attention to the game," Craig says. "They just kept coming over to us and getting autographs."

On Wednesday, Craig was perched atop a North Easton fire engine for a homecoming parade that took on the aura of a free Beatles concert. "There were three state troopers with billy clubs around me, trying to keep people away," Craig says. "I never even *liked* state troopers before." During the parade, Craig had groceries and clothing thrust into his arms and accepted 20 dozen roses—"How much does a dozen roses cost, anyway? $25? And 20 people paid that?"—and, perhaps best of all, a case of Heineken's.

Later, Craig and his family—he is the sixth of eight children—wanted to go out for dinner but were mobbed by well-wishers at every turn. "So some restaurant sent a meal over to our house in a cop car," he says. And through it all, the Craig telephone rang nonstop, as it had for almost a week. "We must've had 10,000 phone calls," says Don Craig, 32, Jim's oldest brother. "I haven't been to work in two weeks."

At that point, Craig hadn't even come to terms with the Flames, who drafted him in the fourth round in 1977, following his sophomore season at BU.

continued

Even before he played his first game in Atlanta, Craig was called "Georgia's most famous citizen."

But Wednesday evening Craig lost his amateur status when his agent, Bob Murray, struck a deal with Atlanta General Manager Cliff Fletcher. In signing with the Flames through the 1982-83 season, Craig received a contract that called for a $45,000 bonus, an annual salary in the $85,000 range and a guarantee of endorsements.

"For seven years we've been unable to attract the interest of Atlanta's advertising community," Fletcher says, "but now they're knocking down our doors." By that time Coca-Cola had already gone directly to Craig, who received $35,000 for doing a one-shot TV commercial.

Craig may be the savior of the Atlanta franchise. Plagued by poor attendance, Atlanta is resigned to losing at least $2 million this season. Rumors of the Flames' departure from Georgia are rampant; according to the latest ones, the team will play next season in Calgary or Dallas or East Rutherford, N.J. But with Craig in the lineup, there could be a turnabout. His box-office appeal immediately became apparent.

Minutes after the U.S. beat Finland for the gold medal, the Flames sold 500 tickets for the Colorado game. Atlantans just assumed Craig was on his way. When the Flames announced his signing, several thousand more tickets were snatched up. "We never even said he would play," says Fletcher. By the time Craig arrived in town, the game was sold out. "Without Craig, we'd have a crowd of about 7,000 for this game," said one team official. "The kid will be worth 8,000 seats." At an average of $8 per ticket. And, best of all, Craig would be in goal.

"There was some concern about playing him against Colorado," says Fletcher. "If a goalie starts against, say, Montreal and sees 40 shots, the feeling is that he's had a bit of work. But against a Colorado, he might see 20 shots, and if a few go in, he won't be excused, as he could be if he played Montreal. This was a real test."

Before flying south, Craig got in some skating at BU with his old coach, Jackie Parker. Then, armed with a sheepskin coat and four hockey sticks, he tried unsuccessfully to evade crowds at Logan as he left for Atlanta Thursday night. "How can all these people recognize me?" he said in a bewildered tone. Told that his face was constantly beamed into millions of homes during the Olympics, he responded, "Well, I haven't even seen the *highlights* yet."

When Craig got onto the plane for Atlanta, the passengers greeted him with another ovation. "I wish I could think of new things to say," he said as he settled into his seat. "I'm boring myself."

On Friday he skated with his new teammates for the first time, at a rink in suburban Atlanta. Looking fatigued and wearing his almost permanent five-o'clock shadow, Craig positioned himself in the cage while all the Flames lined up, four pucks apiece, to take target practice. "I was afraid they'd all shoot at once," Craig said.

But the drill was no more than a "Welcome to the NHL, Jimbo." He fended off shots with the quick kick seen so often during the Games and looked almost at ease on the ice. Except for the large turnout of spectators and the cameras that followed Craig's every move, it might have been any Atlanta practice.

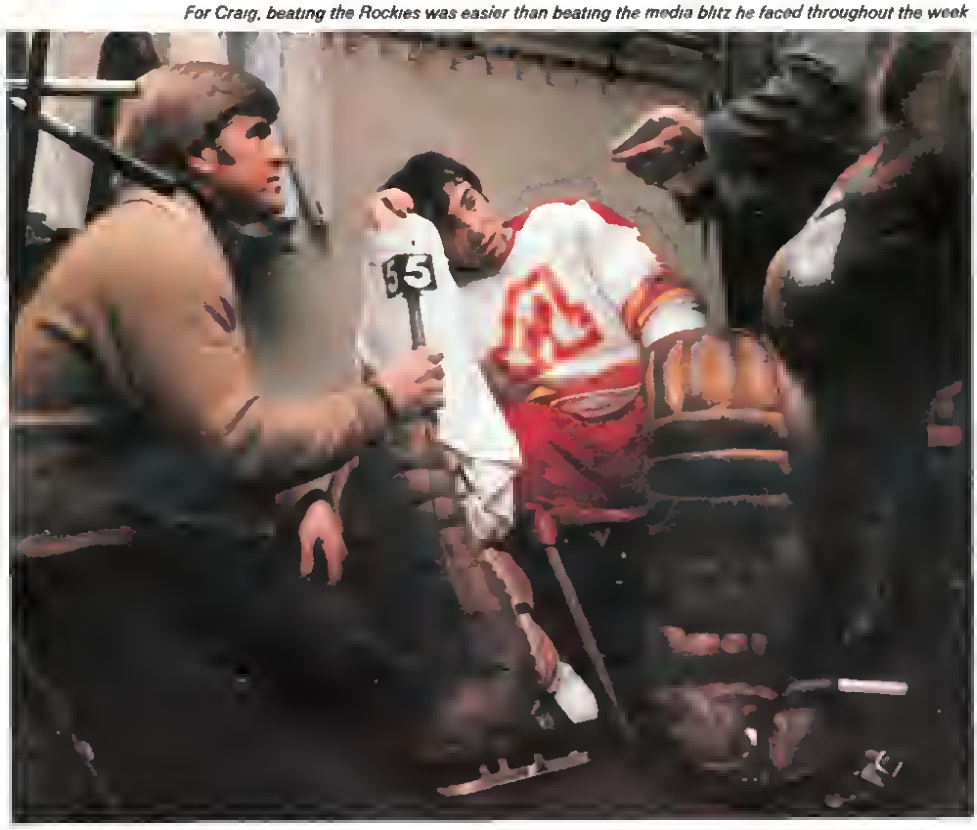
Craig worried that the hoopla attending his arrival would cause resentment among the other Flames, most of whom are anonymous even in Atlanta, but he fit right in. "The attention for him is going to generate enthusiasm for us," says Defenseman Paul Reinhart, who bypassed the '80 Canadian Olympic team to sign with the Flames. "Anything that fills the building helps, and he can do that. Personally, I think it's just great for him."

Craig's biggest concern was the team goaltending situation. Atlanta already had a consistent tandem in Dan Bouchard, 29, and Pat Riggin, 20. Three goaltenders are one too many, but the Flames won't wrestle with that problem until the off-season.

After practice, the other Flames quickly christened Craig "The Savior." Defenseman Brad Marsh quipped, "Wow, he must be good. He stopped me cold." Marsh then invited Craig to unwind over a few beers. But Craig had to stick to his barnstorming schedule and took a rain check. "He's under a lot of pressure," said Reinhart, "but I don't see that we'll have to adjust much to playing in front of him. Maybe we'll mess up once about where he's going to leave a puck after a save. But he'll work out. He's in good shape. And I hear he actually slept last night."

True. Craig had really slept, for the first night in a week, and though he was running on empty, he still fielded questions as deftly as he'd stopped pucks. At his midday press conference Friday, in the hall of a hotel with an ice rink, a six-piece Dixieland band swung from *On, Wisconsin* to *Yankee Doodle*. Shoppers lingered near a stage draped in red and blue, and a horde of reporters vied

For Craig, beating the Rockies was easier than beating the media blitz he faced throughout the week



PHOTOGRAPHS BY LANE STEWART

THEN THE GOLD TURNED TO GREEN

For Morrow, the morrow brought $225,000

Turning Olympic gold into NHL greenbacks was the order of the week, not only for Jim Craig, but also for six other members of the U.S. Olympic hockey team Center Mark Johnson signed a three-year, $250,000 contract with the Penguins and was given a hero's welcome when he played his first game Sunday afternoon in Pittsburgh against the Islanders One of Johnson's opponents was Ken Morrow, the Olympic defenseman who agreed to a three-year, $225,000 contract with the Islanders. Minnesota signed Forward Steve Christoff to a three-year, $225,000 contract and unveiled him against the Canadiens in the Forum on Thursday night, the North Stars gave Steve Janaszak, Craig's backup in goal, a two-year, $100,000 contract Sunday afternoon, and that night he held high-scoring Buffalo to a 2–2 tie. Winnipeg signed Center Dave Christian to a three-year, $225,000 contract; seven seconds into his first pro game Sunday, he scored a goal against Chicago Montreal gave Defenseman Bill Baker a three-year, $200,000 contract and plans to send him to Nova Scotia for seasoning. The dollar figures for all contracts include signing bonuses, and each agreement also includes a "two-way" clause providing for a lower salary should the player be sent to the minor leagues

for "exclusive" interviews. Local sportswriters pumped Craig for in-depth analyses of what he thinks of playing in the NHL. "But I haven't played a game yet," he said *Everyone* asked if he had a girl friend, mentioning an ABC profile that showed him with a girl. "That was *last* week," he said. Even a priest with a press pass got into the act, wondering aloud if Craig is Catholic—"because if you're not, my paper can't do this story." Fear not, Father, he is.

Later, back at the Flames' office, Craig chomped on a wad of green bubble gum and answered more questions, taped a two-part between-periods TV interview and fought off losing his voice. When the bouquets of microphones were cleared away late Friday afternoon, Craig asked plaintively, "Is there someplace I can hide?" There wasn't.

Georgia Governor George Busbee had invited Craig to the Capitol. Jim Craig Day was declared, and the state senate recessed briefly to meet the man Busbee called "Georgia's most famous citizen." Female staffers gushed over Craig's Bahstan accent and clung to him as they posed for Instamatic pictures. Craig's throat was getting raspier, but he smiled on, even though he had cracked a tooth on some airline food the previous evening As he told Busbee how happy he was to be in Atlanta, Craig was hoping to see a dentist. But not just yet, Jim. One more TV appearance.

As he left the Capitol, Craig marveled at the weather: 60° and sunshine. "What a day to play even nine holes," he said, and then he headed for his final appointment of the afternoon

On his way to the TV station, Craig thumbed through the Atlanta press guide, studying his teammates' mug shots. "I want to be able to recognize these guys," he said. And then he talked a bit about the Olympic team. "Sure, it would've been good to have a few days together, because we were all part of that big thrill. But now, for some of us, it's a business, and if you have a chance to do a commercial or something that will pay you, you'll do that instead of taking the time for yourself."

Craig caught quick glimpses of himself on two different TV channels Friday night, saw highlights of the U.S.-Soviet game—at last—and told a local sportscaster that, yes, it was true, he does shake hands and kiss his father after games. "I know he's proud of me, and a goalie's dad can't enjoy a game until it's over," Craig said. "Besides, it makes him feel good."

Craig's familial bonds are tight. After the U.S. beat Finland, he didn't join the leaping mass of humanity that was his team, but skated, instead, to the side of the rink, scanning the stands for his father

"During the last few minutes of that game, I was thinking how great it would've been if Mom could've seen it," he said. Peg Craig died three years ago, and Jim knew his father was sharing his thoughts. "I felt if we could just make eye contact, it would be O.K.," Jim says. When he stood apart from his exuberant teammates, counting the rows in a vain search for his dad's seat and asking, "Where's my father?" the scene brought a lump to America's throat. "And ever since then, the first thing people want to know is if I found my father," Jim says. "That impressed me People really cared."

And how they care in Atlanta. Don Craig—both senior and junior—attended the Saturday game at the Omni, and the Atlanta fans gave them a long loud welcome. They waved to the crowd, and Jim, down on the ice, gave them a little salute with his stick. Between periods the Craigs were approached, but not surrounded, by friendly Atlantans, and they smiled through it all. After the game, Don Craig Sr. told the press, "I feel 25."

By midnight, with the W on his record, Jim seemed refreshed, too, even though his night was far from over; he would have to film his Coke commercial into the wee hours. "During the third period, I felt like like I belonged," he said. "It's been a long season for me already, and I know it's going to be tough. But playing hockey is what I've always wanted to do. And now that I've got the job, I want to do it as long as I can. I think it must have been in the stars for me to be a hockey player."

His No. 1 jersey may have been in the stars, too. When Fletcher presented him with the shirt, Craig wondered if his old No. 30 was available. "That's Bouchard's," Craig was told, "but we could get you 29." Craig wavered and then decided to stick with his *numero uno*. But, coming down to earth, the big question in Atlanta is: Can Jim Craig stay No. 1 long enough to keep the Flames from becoming the Calgary Broncos? END

MARTIN

BERKELEY BILLY COMES HOME AGAIN

Born in the Bay Area 51 years ago, Billy Martin is back in the neighborhood as manager of Charlie Finley's downtrodden Oakland A's, an assignment that, given the personalities of the principals, may not last the season **by RON FIMRITE**

Billy Martin finally returned home last week after a 30-year odyssey that was almost as chaotic and about as well chronicled as the original. Berkeley Billy, as he is still known in the San Francisco Bay Area, was "introduced" at a press conference in Oakland last Thursday as the latest manager of the A's. This local media event, attended by as many persons as ordinarily watch an A's weekday-afternoon home game, was merely a formality. Billy had officially been hired a week earlier by Charlie Finley, who, to his apparent dismay, remains the owner of baseball's sorriest franchise.

Martin and Finley? Now, there are strange bedfellows. When reminded by one of his interrogators on Thursday that Finley is an owner who has a history of firing managers (16) and Martin is a manager who has a history of being fired by owners (four), Berkeley Billy, dapper in a light gray suit, responded lightheartedly, "We're a perfect combination, aren't we?" Actually, if rumors gaining wide currency in baseball have substance, they will not be a combination much longer, because Finley is reportedly prepared to sell the A's to buyers who will keep the team where it is. And that is where Martin, the East Bay native, thinks the A's should be. "It's a pleasure to be back home. I'll do everything possible to promote the team here," he said. "I think Oakland is a good baseball town."

Indeed it was when he played there. The Pacific Coast League-champion 1948 Oakland Oaks, managed by the man who would become Martin's sainted mentor with the Yankees, Casey Stengel, and the 1949 team, managed by Charley Dressen, both drew better in a rickety 13,000-seat minor league park than did last year's A's, whose attendance of 306,763 was the lowest in the major leagues since the Athletics of Philadelphia attracted 304,666 customers in 1954. Finley is counting on Martin to pull in that many fans by himself. And though Martin insists, with commendable if unfounded optimism, that his players will become overnight matinee idols, his name, not theirs, will be the drawing card in his old stomping grounds. The word "stomping" is not used lightly, incidentally, for when Billy was growing up in West Berkeley, stomping—as in "so-and-so stomped the hell out of so-and-so"—was pretty much the primary recreation among young males.

Martin used the occasion of his ascension to Finley's revolving managerial chair last week to visit that neighborhood before returning to the A's spring training camp in Scottsdale, Ariz. His mother, Joan Downey, still lives in the green two-story wooden house where Martin was born 51 years ago. "Born upstairs, circumcised right here in the kitchen," she says proudly.

"My mom is older than she weighs—78 years to 75 pounds," says Martin. "From her I get all my meanness and all my heart."

Mrs. Downey, who adorns her frocks with assorted comic badges—ITALIAN POWER, BOYFRIEND WANTED, NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY—conveys some of her son's celebrated irascibility and much of his considerable charm as well.

"I remember when Billy was with the Oaks," she says, chuckling. "We went to see them play in Sacramento. Well, they had this one colored fellow on the Oakland team—Artie Wilson was his name—and these guys from Sacramento got on him something terrible. I decided I wasn't going to take any more of that crap, so I punched one of 'em. Cops came around and took 'em all away." She and Martin's stepfather, John Downey, recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, a milestone of domesticity achieved, Mrs. Downey concludes, "be- *continued*

Whatever Martin is demonstrating—could this be a new way to fly?—he has his players' attention

cause he never gave me a bad time. If he had, I'd have thrown his ass out."

To know Martin, it is necessary to know what life in West Berkeley was like in the middle and late 1940s. It is a racially mixed, lower-income neighborhood in the college town, the part nearest the Bay, and back then it had about as much to do with the rest of Berkeley, culturally and socially, as, say, Vatican City, in a much different way, has to do with Rome. The street smarts that New Yorkers found so beguiling in Billy were not learned in the Bronx but on the playgrounds or, more accurately, the battlegrounds, of West Berkeley.

If you think Billy's full of vinegar, try his mother.

"I grew up fighting," Martin says. "It isn't that I wanted to. It's just that I had no choice. These weren't kids who stole stuff. Their recreation was fighting." So youngsters growing up in West Berkeley endured a daily ordeal of being "chosen," being victimized by those devious combatants who might "cop a Sunday [sneak a punch]." Recess was as much a time for fights as for tag.

James Kenney Park, only a block and a half from Martin's home, was where he learned to play baseball and, of necessity, duke it out. He became proficient at both, as any number of belligerents who have tested his prowess since have discovered. One just does not, says Martin, "mess with a West Berkeley boy."

"I'd punch the bag at James Kenney for three hours every day without gloves," Martin recalls. "I'd also box with a beavyweight there, Trevio Torrez, who every once in a while would let me have it." Kenney Park was West Berkeley's Agincourt, but Burbank Junior High School—now the West Campus of Berkeley High—was the citadel from which issued the teen-age armies of the night. If the neighborhood seemed threatened by auslanders—from West Oakland maybe, or South Berkeley—these gangs, some numbering into the hundreds, rushed to the barricades. For the mild of manner and the faint of heart, acquiring an education in the Berkeley school system of that time was an experience comparable to an Apache rite of passage. Life could be terrifying.

Judging by Martin's press conference, his mere presence in Oakland will bring fans to the ball park

Youngsters emerging whole from this crucible found they had a big adjustment to make at Berkeley High School. Its huge student body, then already more than 3,000, was neatly segregated by class distinctions as rigid as any in Victorian England. An off-campus magazine defined the castes and cartooned the prototypes for the edification of the unobservant. At the upper level were "The Goats," the scions of wealthy families who dwelt in the hills above town in houses that commanded spectacular views of San Francisco and the Bay. The Goats had fraternities and sororities. They held all the good dances and parties. They weekended in Carmel. They occupied "The Slope," a part of the campus where the elite met to eat lunch. Goat boys wore cashmere sweaters and flight jackets, and they rolled up the legs of their Levi's so that half an inch of the bluish-gray underside of the denim showed. In the middle of the social strata were "The Lily-whites," outcasts who preferred scholarship to society. They did not care what they wore. And at the bottom were "The Shopboys," identified by their oiled ducktails and Levi's rolled under so that no bluish-gray appeared. Martin, technically, was not a Shopboy, having chosen an academic course of study, but the Shopboys were his people, the mean-spirited kids from West Berkeley.

There was no upward mobility at Berkeley High. If you fit into one category, you remained there until graduation did you part. But gifted West Berkeley athletes, like Martin and Babe Van Heuit, a three-sport star, achieved a measure of celebrity on talent alone. Martin was all-county in both baseball and basketball, and despite his relatively small stature, he probably would have succeeded in football had his mother given him permission to play. Those in baseball and basketball who messed with Martin quickly found themselves supine. Billy was an on-field brawler long before he reached the major leagues. At Berkeley High, though, he was essentially an athlete who could

continued

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never make the school's inner circle.

"I was ugly then," Martin says. "Funny looking. My ears stuck out." Indeed, he seemed all ears, nose and fists. "I never dated a girl at Berkeley High. I went to one dance. I was afraid to stand up in class because my clothes were so bad."

"When Billy graduated [in 1946], I bought him a suit and gave him a $20 bill," his mother says. "I wasn't all that damn poor. I was poor, though."

Driving around the East Bay last week with his third-base coach, Clete Boyer, Martin somehow found fond memories surging back from the dark years of his adolescence. "I got real enthusiastic pointing out different places. Clete, I'd say, I did that here and that there." Later, in Scottsdale, he could smile over a memory that recalls only the good while rejecting the bad. "You know," he said, setting aside a beer at the Pink Pony restaurant, "I really enjoyed Berkeley High. I really did." Time heals.

The Pink Pony is where Martin and his coaching staff—Boyer, Lee Walls, Art Fowler and George Mitterwald—mull over how to deploy their young charges. There is a light, Martin and his staff claim, at the end of the tunnel. "I'm not going into the season just to show up," Martin says. "I guarantee you we won't finish last. I took over a team in Texas that had lost 105 games and drawn less than 700,000 the year before. We finished second and drew a million-two. The A's are a young team with a lot of good pitching arms. An older team is tougher for a manager. But they're all really the same." Then he lapsed into his familiar formula for managerial success. "You'll have 15 guys who will run through a wall for you, five who hate you and five who are undecided. The trick is keeping the five who hate you away from the five who are undecided."

One of Martin's first tasks this spring was to shore up the confidence of 24-year-old Pitcher Matt Keough, who had a catastrophic 1979 season, which included 15 losses in a row. Keough's suffering was attributable in part to shoddy infield play, Martin says, and that will be improved this year. The young righthander's reaction to Martin's hiring seems representative of the team's. "Hallelujah," Keough exults. "We need somebody like this. I have so much respect for him. He stuck his neck out for me by putting me in the 1978 All-Star Game. Now it's my turn to deliver the goods."

"With Billy coming in, things are automatically exciting," says Catcher Jim Essian, 29, one of the few A's veterans. "He's going to make us think about winning for a change. We're definitely going to be a lot better."

Such confidence may seem misplaced on a team that lost 108 games last season, but Martin's enthusiasm *is* contagious. On the Scottsdale diamond, under the warm Arizona sun, he seems omnipresent, counseling base runners here, instructing infielders there and, with hands characteristically thrust into his back pockets, exhorting hitters in the cage.

Martin will earn $125,000 this year, a salary paid, he says, entirely by Finley. He and Yankee owner George Steinbrenner agreed on a lump-sum settlement of the remaining two years of his New York contract. "We split as friends," Billy says of the man who hired him twice and canned him twice. "I think deep down we liked each other. George offered me a front-office job—I could've named the title. Maybe in three, four years I'll be ready for some executive-type job, but not now. I'm enjoying this. It's fun. I know it's a challenge, but I'm not on any sort of ego kick. There is nothing more I have to prove."

Actually, there is. He wants to silence the critics who cite his off-field altercations—the last with a marshmallow salesman in Bloomington, Minn. got him cashiered by the Yankees last October—as evidence that he is a discredit to the game. "I'm married to baseball," he says. "I've been in love with it since I was a little kid. . . . I hope I never see another fight again for the rest of my life, believe me."

He also wants to shatter three prevailing myths: that he cannot manage a team because he cannot manage himself; that he's always meddling with the front office; and that he's a good manager over the short haul but tends to self-destruct after that. And, finally, he wants to prove that baseball can succeed in Oakland. He would like his biggest success to be in the community where he was born and raised.

And if by some stroke of genius or luck he should rally the A's, he could turn then to someone from the old hometown and say, as he enjoys saying even after minor successes, "Not bad for a West Berkeley boy." Just being alive, it should be added, is not bad for a West Berkeley boy of his vintage. **END**

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THE FUTURE IS SOON

With Muhammad Ali overweight as well as overage, the heavyweight division is the pits, but some young boxers could pull it out of the hole

by ***WILLIAM NACK***

Boxing historian Jimmy Jacobs just couldn't believe it, couldn't believe that the heavyweight division had fallen to the pathetic state manifest last September in Las Vegas, where Larry Holmes was defending his WBC championship against the ultimate mega-hanger and lump merchant, Earnie Shavers.

The quality of heavyweight fighters, like the length of skirts and the price of cahbage, is given to periodic fluctuations, hut this was something else. Jacobs owns the U.S.'s most extensive collection of fight films, a lihrary whose contents he studies regularly, hut of all the heavyweight championship fights he'd ever seen, from the early part of the century to the present, he'd never witnessed a performance to compare with this—never watched a heavyweight championship hout so laughably inept and amateurish. Jacobs has to go back almost 50 years to find anything remotely like the state the division is in today.

In the doldrums of the early 1930s, hefore Joe Louis won the title, there were five champions in five years—Max Schmeling, Jack Sharkey, Primo Carnera, Max Baer and James J. Braddock. "But this is worse," Jacohs says. "By far. It is only temporary. But right now it is dreadful." And most dreadful of all was that fight last fall that underscored in Jacobs' mind the extent to which the heavyweight division—normally the most exciting in boxing—had sunk since Joe Frazier and Muhammad Ali suddenly grew old together in Manila and Jimmy Young gave religion to George Foreman in San Juan and then slipped away himself into the twilight.

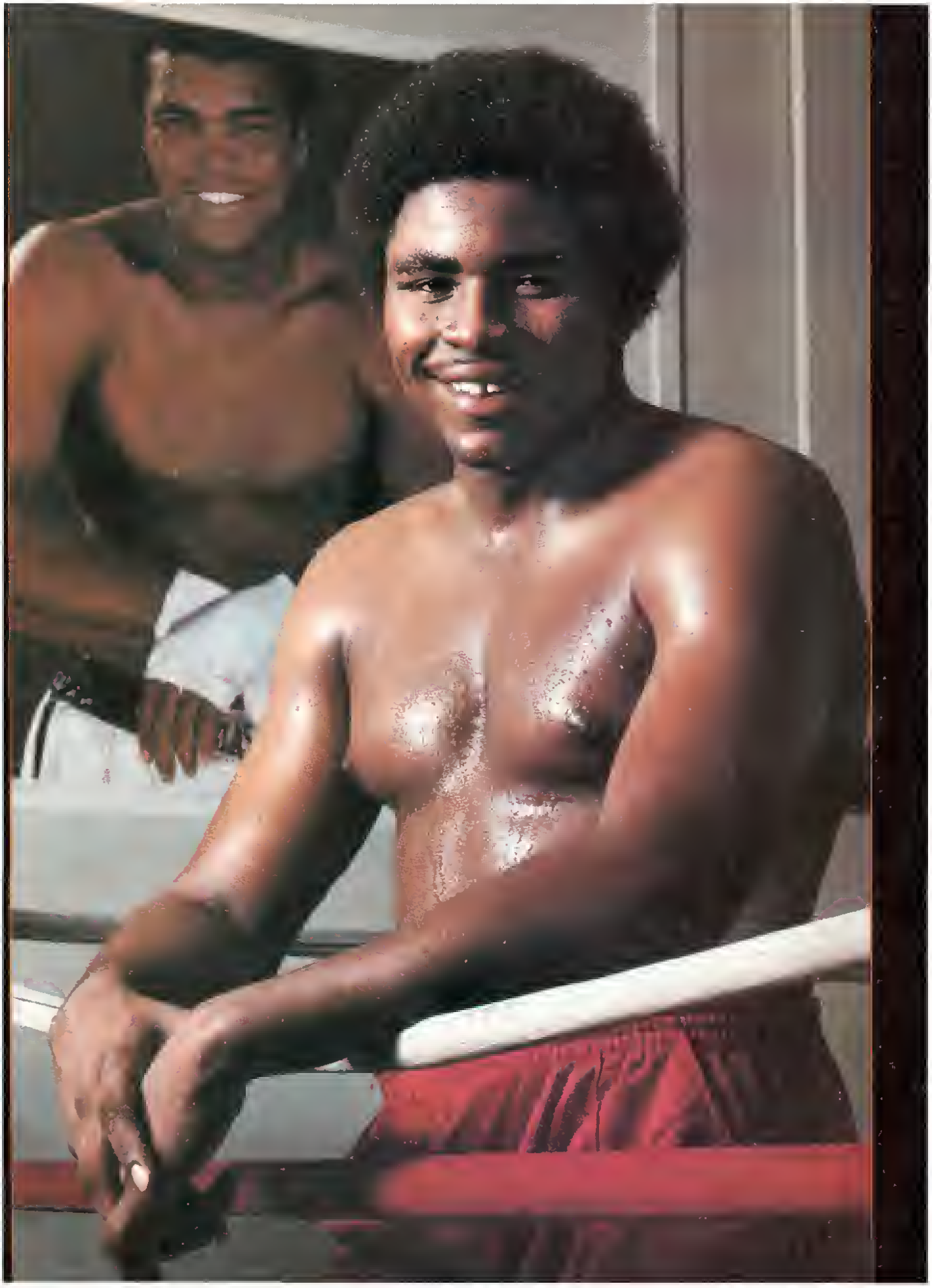
Here's how it went in Vegas: Shavers' thunderous right hand decks the champ in the seventh round. Holmes is out. But wait! Holmes staggers to his feet and, swinging into an old survival tactic, begins dancing in place and shaking his head to clear the fog away. And here comes Shavers again. He swings, a roundhouse right, hut misses, and oearly catapults himself into the seats. Thus Holmes gets away. And the remainder of the fight is reduced to slapstick—Shavers too limp to defend himself, Holmes too spent to drop him. "I'd never seen a heavyweight championship fight in which, after it was half over, neither man could throw an effective punch," Jacobs says. "By round eight, if someone didn't know it was for the championship of the world, if he'd just tuned in, he'd have thought it was a comedy. Holmes and Shavers could harely lift their arms. They were throwing punches at phantom heads. Here were two men fighting for a cherished title. It was inept. That is a perfect illustration of the plight of the heavyweight division today."

Much like that of Rome, the fall of the division was long antedated hy a gradual decline, which became starthngly visihle in Fehruary 1978 when Leon Spinks, virtually an amateur, easily outpointed an undertrained and overconfident Ali to win the title. In short order, Ali won the championship back and theo retired; South Africa's Gerrie Coetzee knocked out Spinks; John Tate beat Coetzee handily to win the WBA title vacated by Ali; Holmes, who had become WBC champ in 1978 after winning a very close decision over Ken Norton, harely survived Mike Weaver, a complete unknown; Shavers knocked out Kenny Norton, Holmes harely outlasted Shavers; Alfredo Evangelista almost knocked out Spinks; Holmes defeated a feeble Lorenzo Zanon; Ali revealed—astonishingly—that if the money is right, he'll come hack

With Holmes giving off signals that he is spent and with no one knowing wheth-

continued

Page, like Ali, is from Louisville, and he's so good that his major foe may be his appetite.



er Tate is of true championship caliber, with the division no longer consolidated around the dominating presence of one man, the heavyweight class is boxing's most spacious neutral corner. Fighters are standing by waiting to be waved in. There's plenty of room. The established boxers, from Tate to Weaver, are being joined in the battle to become the next undisputed champ by a bunch of prospects. Most of the good ones are a year or so from a title shot. Most are in their early 20s, all are largely unchallenged and relatively unknown. There are more hooks and jabs than right hands here, more boxers than bangers. There is among them a dancer out of Ali's hometown, Louisville; like the young Cassius Clay, he's sure there is no heavyweight who can beat him. One prospect used to make his own clothes, and today he throws roses to his mother at ringside. There is a former heroin addict who says he kicked the habit with a New Year's resolution, and, of course, there's a former convict who fought his way out of prison. There is a Great White Hope with a chilling left hook, a real Crunchola bar, and there is an orthopedic technician from a Baltimore hospital who wants to be known as "the master boxer" of all time more than he wants to be champion of the world. With Ali and Frazier gone, the stream is filling up with trout, but can any of them swim?

In the order of prowess and promise, here is the 1980 unofficial SPORTS ILLUSTRATED ranking of promising young heavyweights. The assessments are based upon interviews with trainers, managers and fighters, upon ringside observations in gyms and arenas and the reading of palms and tea leaves.

1) Greg Page, 21, of Louisville. Weight: 225 to 242 pounds. Height: 6′ 2″. Pro record: 8–0. None of the young heavies is as skilled and naturally gifted as Page. In fact, there is probably no heavyweight anywhere, young or old, who has so many tools. Nonetheless there are serious questions about him—about the way he has been nursed along on tomato cans since he turned pro in February of 1979, about his tendency to gain weight, about his penchant for showboating in the ring, à la Ali, and about the depth of his desire, the strength of his self-discipline. Page was an excellent amateur, a national heavyweight champion in both the AAUs and Golden Gloves, but he lost to Tate twice in the amateurs and once to another prospect, Michael Dokes. Page was an accomplished high school basketball player who has said he would rather play ball than be a boxer. He is marvelously agile, lithe and fluid, and in and out of the ring he moves with the quick rhythms of a basketball player, as if forever looking for a board to crash. He hits hard with both hands, throwing effective hooks and jabs. "A monster with tremendous skills," says Angelo Dundee, Ali's former trainer. Longtime New York Manager Al Braverman goes even further. "He has more ability than everybody put together," he says. "Best-looking fighter in the whole group of prospects. But a bad image as far as picking opponents. He looks for guys from Woodlawn Cemetery."

That is a standard knock against many young fighters and their handlers, but with Page it seems especially relevant.

Dokes (above) is no ordinary Joe. He's unbeaten, and so is Cooney (below), a slugger who could soon become the division's real power.

Since becoming a professional following his distinguished amateur career—he was 90–11 with 55 KOs—not one of the eight men he has fought has come even remotely close to testing him. He knocked out all eight before the end of the fourth round, and six of them didn't make it through the second.

And then there's the matter of weight. As a pro Page has fought at as much as 242 pounds. At one point he shot up to 250 between bouts. "Pizza, potato chips, candy bars, popsicles, hamburgers, peanuts," Page says. That's a list that leaves the experts shaking their heads; if Page hasn't the will to lay off the junk food, can he possibly have the determination to become a heavyweight champ? Page's father, Albert, a bus driver and one of his son's handlers, figures that Greg should fight at between 220 and 225. If he's already having trouble making that weight as a 21-year-old, how much is he likely to weigh at 25?

2) Gerry Cooney, 23, of Northport, N.Y. Weight: 222 pounds. Height: 6′ 5″. Pro record: 22–0. If Page has it over the other prospects in talent, Cooney stands above his peers, including Page, as a one-punch hanger in the tradition of Sonny Liston and Shavers. In fact, aside from Shavers, who is nearing retirement, probably no active heavyweight throws a more devastating punch than Cooney. Cooney is a converted southpaw, and his left hook, equally punishing to the body and to the head, has done most of the damage to the 19 opponents he has laid out since he left the amateur ranks in early 1977.

Unlike Page, Cooney has no weight problem and the intensity of his desire is unquestioned, but there are other matters that raise doubts as to exactly how far he can go. His color has unavoidably given rise to the suspicion that he will turn out to be just another White Hope who'll get his soon enough, just wait and see, in the way of the Quarrys and Bohicks. And there are boxers, Page among them, who scoff at Cooney, calling him a one-punch fighter who lacks the diversity to beat them. "If you kill his left hook he's dead," Page says. "It's like killing the battery of a car. All you have to do is go back to the fundamentals to heat him." Some experts think Cooney is too tall and too awkward to be taken seriously. But Dundee likes the clumsiness and says that Cooney handles his height well. "Ali had a little bit of awkwardness about him and I left it alone," Dundee says. "Victor Valle, Cooney's trainer, is leaving it alone, too. His height is a big asset. You have to reach for him. That's why he's developed a left uppercut. If you make a mistake he'll hit you on the chin with that uppercut, and that's the best punch in the book."

Cooney grew up on Long Island, the son of construction worker Tony Cooney, who pushed Gerry into boxing in his teens, forcing him to do roadwork, exhorting him to train. He taught his son discipline. "I had to be in bed early, up early, and run, run, run," Cooney says. "After school I'd have to catch the train for a gym in Queens. I'd get home at 9:30. Even on Sunday I'd go to the gym. I couldn't even think about not showing up." Though Cooney bridled at the discipline, he went along. Tony died four years ago of lung cancer, at age 55, and today Gerry sees his drive toward the heavyweight title as a kind of imperative; he must do it to fulfill the promise his dad had seen in him.

Cooney's managers, Mike Jones and Dennis Rappaport, have come under attack for the way they have handled him, just as they've drawn fire for picking spots for the other star of their stable, Lightweight Howard Davis. "I hope Cooney doesn't have his managers' guts," Braverman says. "They're always treading on camphor balls. If they're that careful they must be scared of something we don't know about. Perhaps he's got a potato for a chin."

Jones bristles at that. "When we signed Gerry he was 19," he says. "It takes time for a heavyweight to develop his confidence and skills. It would have been a terrible mistake to succumb to the constant pressure to rush Gerry into fights we didn't feel he was ready for." For the most part, Cooney's record is a roll call of sausages, but some of the victims could fight a little, notably Dino Dennis, who had a 38–2 record and an iron chin. Dennis was coming off a long lay-off, and there is doubt whether he was anywhere near ready. "Dennis trained with me five weeks for that fight, and he had no excuses," says Braverman. None other than George Foreman had once pounded Dennis mercilessly, but he didn't drop him. Cooney, who cut up Dino in the second round, knocked him down with a left hook in the third to finish it. "I'm not on his handwagon, but I've got to admit that Cooney is one of the most devastating left-hookers since Joe Louis," Braverman says. "This guy can rip with a hook, under and over. Dennis always took a great punch. He took murderous punches from Foreman. Nobody, but nobody, put down Dennis—except Cooney."

3) Michael Dokes, 21, of Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Weight: 217. Height: 6′ 3″. Pro record: 17–0. He's called Dynamite Dokes by publicists, but don't be misled by the appellation. Before his last fight, a February victory over French heavyweight champion Lucien Rodriguez, Dokes' followers and promoters made much of the nickname, suggesting that he was one of the biggest bangers in the division. Even Dokes extolled his own prowess, but less biased observers were not so sure. And the Rodriguez fight did nothing to dispel the doubts. In fact it reinforced them. Dokes throws a punch that keeps your attention, but he couldn't take out Rodriguez, though he hit him with triplicate lefts and rights.

Ray Arcel, the venerable trainer of Roberto Duran, sees in Dokes a heavyweight of considerable promise who, like Cooney and Page, continues to learn from fight to fight. "That fight against Rodriguez did Dokes more good than any other fight he could have had," Arcel says. "You don't knock a guy out hitting him with a right hand; you knock him out by setting him up with the left hand. Dokes has one thought—bang-bang-bang. He gets ahead of himself. He loses direction. You have to know how and where to hit a guy, how to set a man up.

continued

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Deep down he had to learn something from that fight."

Dokes has the gifts. While he isn't the puncher he thinks he is, he has exceptional hand speed and reflexes and is among the better natural athletes in the division. He's a clever boxer who works hard at his job. He tended toward flamboyance in his early days as a pro, but that's no longer part of his style.

The turning point for Dokes came last year when he decisioned contender Jimmy Young in Las Vegas. "I had to show everybody I could fight," Dokes says.

If he stays on schedule, Dokes should be making a run at the title by the end of the year. He has some flair. He throws roses before every fight, a tribute to his mother, Sopora, and dresses immaculately. He is even able to make his own clothes. "I learned how to do it in school," he says. "Instead of taking auto mechanics, I took bome economics. But I haven't had the opportunity to sew in some time."

4) Pinklon Thomas, 22, of Pontiac, Mich. Weight: 210. Height: 6′ 3″. Pro record: 12–0. Last Dec. 14 at 4:30 a.m., Thomas was leaving an Atlantic City casino witb $300 he had won at the roulette table when someone stopped and asked him if he wanted to fight that night. Tbomas, who trains in Philadelphia, had come to Atlantic City to watch the fights, not participate in them. One of the heavyweights on the card pulled out, and the promoters needed a man to fill the card. Thomas accepted, and at 5 a.m. he slipped off to bed. Cooney and Page also fought on that card, but Pinklon (Think Pink) Thomas stole the show. He dispatched Bobby Jordan in five behind a popping sweet jab.

Thomas is the question mark among the heavyweight prospects, but he has won against long odds before. At age 11, running with an older crowd in Pontiac, Thomas started doing drugs. "I began snorting dope and never thought I'd catch a habit, you know?" he says. "A year and a half later I found myself sticking myself with that spike. I was a dope fiend. I started doing crazy things to support it."

Thomas was on drugs, except for brief periods of rehabilitation, until New Year's Eve of 1977, when he made a resolution to get off them for good. He had always been an excellent athlete. In the seventh grade he ran the 100-yard dash in 9.9, according to a former junior high school coach, Bob Kaiser, and he was an ambidextrous pitcher in baseball. Once, in grade school, he won both ends of a doubleheader—the first throwing lefthanded, the second throwing right. By the time he was 19, he was concentrating on boxing.

Thomas turned pro in August 1978 after winning two of three amateur bouts and has since knocked out Leroy Caldwell, a journeyman, and stopped Jerry Williams, the former all-Army champ who just turned pro. Green as a roulette table, he has a bunch to learn. His jab goes bang, but he hardly uses his right, and when he does, it's as a righthand lead, not off the jab. He jumps around too much in the ring. Still, he's fast, strong and talented and can only get better.

5) Willie (the Cannon) Shannon, 27, of Portland, Ore. Weight: 190. Height: 6′ 3″. Pro record: 15–0. Shannon served nine years for robbery in a Florida penitentiary before settling in Portland to fight for Mike (Motor-Mouth) Morton, a builder and fight manager there. He is light for the division nowadays, but experts rave about his grit and boxing skills. He beat Caldwell in Las Vegas last October even though he broke his right band early in the fight and had to get off the deck in the eighth. When the fight was over, Sylvester Stallone, who happened to be in the crowd, climbed into the ring, embraced Shannon and said, "You're the real Rocky." Shannon is a combination puncher-boxer. The only knock against him is the apparent brittleness of his right hand. He has now broken it in two fights.

6) George Chaplin, 29, of Baltimore. Weight: 212. Height: 6′ 3″. Pro record: 17–1–1. Chaplin wants more than anything to be known as the best boxer among the heavyweights. To that end he works diligently in Mack Lewis' gym on Eager Street in Baltimore. He came to boxing late, following a four-year tour in the Air Force and college at Morgan State, where he earned a physical education degree. He describes himself as a boxer who moonlights as an orthopedic technician at Lutheran Hospital in Baltimore. He has stopped Duane Bobick and is beginning to look higher.

7) Marty Monroe, 26, of Los Angeles. Weight: 218. Height: 6′ 3″. Pro record: 20–0–1. Monroe is a fine boxer with an excellent jab, crisp and accurate, and a fair right hand. The rap against him is his tendency to train at half speed.

8) Perscell (Magic) Davis, 21, of Los Angeles. Weight: 220. Height: 6′ 3″. Pro record: 10–0. Davis will be the first fighter to be managed by Ali; in fact, Ali gave Davis his nickname. Drew (Bundini) Brown, Ali's witch doctor of many years, is handling Davis. Magic still has a long way to go, but he's coming. "Another young fighter with a lot of confidence," says Ken Norton, Ali's old rival. "He has a lot of speed, a lot of agility, and he's a fairly good puncher. He's still maturing and very hungry."

9) James (Quick) Tillis, 22, of Chicago. Weight: 195. Height: 6′ 2½″. Pro record: 13–0. Tillis grew up in Tulsa, but last year he struck out for Chicago to put his future in tbe hands of Ernie Terrell, the former WBA heavyweight champ. "He read about my promoting in a magazine," Terrell says. "He arrived with $30 in his pocket, so I put him up at a YMCA." Tillis has since been learning his trade and improving. He is neither big nor a big puncher, but he's as fast as a dart and throws his punches unerringly.

10) Jeff Podgurski, 25, of Las Vegas. Weight: 200. Height: 6′ 2″. Pro record: 7–0–1. A long-shot special, Podgurski is a former kick-boxer who holds a black belt in karate and is a student of ballet. That unlikely background perhaps explains why he's extraordinarily mobile.

And then there are these others in their fashion: Lee Canalito, 25, is 8–0 fighting out of Houston for Dundee. He played in the movie *Paradise Alley* with Stallone. There is 27-year-old Lynn Ball, who just beat Ron Lyle, and Terrell says he has another fighter, a 29-year-old former convict named Floyd (Jumbo) Cummings, who's 7–0 in the pros. Philly's Marvin Stinson and Randy Mack and Mircea Simon of Torrance, Calif. also deserve a close look.

Then there is 28-year-old Mike Koranicki of Youngstown, Ohio, who recently knocked out Kallie Knoetze. And that's not all. This year three talented amateurs who have been pointing for the Olympics are expected to turn pro. Marvis Frazier, son of Joe, looks as good as any prospect to emerge in years. There is Tony Tubbs, who recently beat Marvis. And there is Jimmy Clark, who last month lost a questionable decision to Cuba's Teofilo Stevenson, twice an Olympic gold medalist. With the state the division is in, there's plenty of room at the top, to say nothing of the middle and bottom. **END**

FULL OF HEART IN AN EMPTY HOUSE

The Minnesota Fillies and the rest of the players in the WBL go for broke on the floor, while their struggling frenchises go ell but broke at the box office ***by SARAH PILEGGI***

Outside the bus window a weak winter sun shone on a landscape reduced to the sepia tones of an antique photograph. Desiccated drifts of old snow lined the eastern edge of I-35, and puffs of dust kicked up by a gusty wind raced across the bare cornfields. Only a grain elevator here and there broke the line of the horizon.

The Minnesota Fillies were on their way south to Des Moines to play the Iowa Cornets, with much more at stake than just the lead in the Midwest Division of the professional Women's Basketball League. Coach Terry Kunze played Mastermind with Guard Janet Timperman from Kentucky and reserve Forward Sue Wahl-Bye from St. Cloud, the Fillies' only homebred. Forward Kathy DeBoer read Bill Russell's *Second Wind*. Center Marie Kocurek sat alone, looking out the window, impassive. Donna Wilson, Katrina (K.O.) Owens and Patty Montgomery chattered, breaking into laughter now and then. Gordon Nevers, the Fillies' owner and president, settled down to his customary backgammon game with Point Guard Scooter DeLorme.

Nevers had reason to believe that the worst of his troubles were over, that the fortunes of his team had at last turned for the better. Minnesota's most recent appearance at the Met Center in Bloomington, a 105–71 win over the Chicago Hustle, had drawn a crowd of 4,917, the largest ever for a Fillies home game, and now KMSP-TV in Minneapolis had consented to broadcast the Fillies' game against the Cornets the next day. Furthermore, the timing of the telecast was perfect—2 o'clock on a cold Sunday afternoon, with nothing up against it except a charity telethon, the *CBS Sports Spectacular* and a lousy movie. Nevers felt as confident as he had in months.

Gouging a space in the public consciousness for a new sport requires a little luck and a lot of money, the money being for the purpose of buying time until the luck comes along. The odds against an owner's finances holding up until good fortune arrives are so high that, by comparison, pork belly futures are a gilt-edged investment. The WBL is well into its second season and still waiting. Though it will probably survive this season, it has suffered a number of setbacks. Two of the 14 teams with which the league began the season—the Washington Metros and the Philadelphia Fox—folded because of little attendance and no money. Two other franchises that were foundering at midseason, the Dallas Diamonds and the Milwaukee Does, were deemed worth saving. New ownership and new money were found for both. WBL Commissioner Bill Byrne concedes that a "couple" more teams will probably change hands by spring. He even concedes that the folding of a franchise or two is not inconceivable. But he points to San Francisco, St. Louis and New Jersey as teams that are solid and are gaining in both attendance and media attention. "There has never been a new league that didn't have problems," says Byrne. "But we're here to stay now. We've stabilized."

None of which is to say that any owner anticipates making money this year. "If I owned a team, I'd expect nothing before five years," says Byrne. Nevertheless, discussions are under way in Denver, Boston/Hartford, Phoenix and Tampa, which Byrne predicts will lead to at least two new franchises next season. The cost of a WBL franchise is now $500,000, up from $50,000 in the league's first year and from $100,000 as recently as last September. The average attendance for a WBL game in early February was 2,700. Byrne claims that by averaging 3,500 over an entire schedule, most of the teams could at least break even.

The key, as always, is television, not for its money at this point but for exposure. Whenever a WBL team has had television coverage, the franchise has prospered, relatively speaking. The Chicago Hustle, whose home games are aired live by WGN-TV, lost less money than any of the league's other franchises last year and is setting the pace again this time around.

Nevers and his co-owners lost about $270,000 on the Fillies last year, and the situation had not looked a great deal brighter this year until KMSP-TV finally agreed to do the game against the Cornets in Des Moines.

Of course, Nevers and one of his partners, Dick Higgins, had to make all the hookup arrangements for the telecast themselves, and they had to personally solicit every sponsor for the show's 22 commercial spots, but they had managed somehow. From Nevers' point of view, it was worth the effort and more, because the Fillies were finally going to get the kind of exposure that would show the people of Minneapolis-St. Paul that women's pro basketball is good sport and good entertainment, that the team deserves their support and that henceforth they should come to games at the Met Center by the thousands instead of the customary hundreds.

So ran Nevers' scenario. "This telecast is the best opportunity we've had to improve our chances of succeeding in the Twin Cities market," he said. "We have tried to interest television several times. We had sponsors lined up and we offered the stations plenty of money, but we couldn't get on TV. The broadcasters were concerned about whether we had something people want to watch."

At 1:10 p.m. on that January Sunday at Veterans Auditorium in Des Moines, Kunze banged on the locker-room door and entered. "If we're going to win our division," he said, "we've *got* to beat Iowa. Donna, you have Bolin. Push her to the left when she gets the ball. I don't want her to get a jumper going right." Kunze was directing his instructions at Forward Donna Wilson, the player he calls "our link to quickness." Wilson was

continued

New Jersey's Ann Meyers (left) didn't make the NBA, and she didn't draw at the Met, either

to guard Molly Bolin, a 5′ 9″ product of Iowa high school and college basketball, a phenomenal shooter who the previous season had set a single-game record of 53 points—against the Fillies.

To the rest of his players Kunze said, "If you get tired, don't be afraid to take yourself out. We've got depth. If someone's pushing you around, take care of it. Don't look to the bench. That's your job, not mine. K.O., if they belt you, belt them back.... The 15-foot shot with time, that's our shot. If you've got it, take it. We're shooters, remember that. Show 'em! Remember, all of Minnesota is watching this game. My *mother's* watching this game."

Later, on the bench, with the game about to start and 4,500 Iowa fans in their seats, Kunze muttered, "If we handle the press, we'll be O.K. If not, this is going to be a long day. We are a lit . . . tle slow."

What happened from that point on, to the Fillies, to Nevers' scenario and to the TV fans, including Mrs. Kunze, shouldn't happen to pro wrestling. First of all, the television signal that was supposed to be relayed by land line from Des Moines to Chicago to Minneapolis got lost somewhere along the way, and a quick switch to the Westar satellite had to be arranged. But the dish in Minneapolis, the one with which KMSP-TV receives signals that are bounced off satellites, was facing in the wrong direction and the motorized mechanism normally used to turn it was frozen. The dish had to be turned around by hand, an operation that took 20 minutes. Thus the game had been on for 35 minutes when the show started.

Given the way events were unfolding on the floor in Des Moines, it might have been just as well if the telecast had never gone on the air. Machine Gun Molly was shooting the lights out, and the Fillies could do nothing to stop her. The hotter Machine Gun got, the worse Minnesota looked. At the half the Cornets were leading by 13, and Kunze tore into his team in the locker room. "You're getting your butts kicked by *ath*letes!" he shouted.

By the end of the third period, the Fillies were 21 points down, and four minutes into the fourth the gap was 25 points. Bolin was heading for another record, and when she got it—54 points—with 2:08 remaining, the standing ovation lasted several minutes.

On the bus again, heading north in the dark toward Minneapolis, Kunze said, "There's something about women. When something begins to go wrong, they have trouble turning it around."

At 6:30, not far from the Iowa-Minnesota border, the bus pulled off the highway into a glorified truck stop called Boondocks, USA, an island of neon in the night. With their spirits rising in anticipation of food, the Fillies, except for K.O. and Mason, who didn't want to spend their money, filed into the restaurant. The place was moderately crowded, so the players took seats wherever they found them, some in booths, some at the counter, a few in an area marked THIS SECTION FOR PROFESSIONAL TRUCKERS ONLY. Then, suddenly, Nevers was telling them they had to leave the restaurant; the manager felt the place was too crowded and would not serve them. Somewhat dazed, the Fillies filed back out into the darkness and onto the bus.

Higgins tried to cheer up Nevers by reiterating what he had said three times since lunch: "God is testing us, Gordon." The perfect end to a perfect day.

J. Gordon Nevers, 46, the founder and principal owner of the Fillies, is an essentially cheerful, normally optimistic, fiscally conservative middle-class American father of five who as a result of a middle-class American career crisis at the age of 41 became involved in a sporting proposition—women's professional basketball—that would challenge the gambler in Bet-A-Million Gates.

Nevers graduated from the University of Missouri in 1958 and for 3½ years pitched on minor league teams in the A's organization. When a broken leg in 1961 finished off his already marginal chances for a major league career, he went into his wife's family's undertaking business in Minneapolis, rising eventually to a vice-presidency and part ownership. In 1976 the family business was bought out by a larger company, and Nevers soon realized he was temperamentally unsuited to the corporate approach to death. Comfortably set financially but casting about for something to do, Nevers decided that professional sports might offer some interesting possibilities.

So Nevers set up a sports-consulting business, but when the main chance came, in the form of a two-page flyer announcing the proposed formation of the WBL, Nevers rounded up nine other investors and plunged. At the end of the first year his enterprise had lost the $270,000, not the worst deficit in the league but not the best financial record either. The best—if you can really call it that—was Chicago's loss of only about $250,000.

Attendance at Fillies home games had averaged around 1,000 for the 1978-79 season. Operating by trial and error,

continued

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JO ANNE KALISH

Before the game at Iowa, Coach Kunze chalks it up with DeLorme (left), Wahl-Bye and Timperman

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Nevers cut and traded his way through some 20 players and three coaches in one season, filling the gaps between coaches himself. With Wilson the only original player remaining, Minnesota finished the season 17–17, and Nevers, of all people, had the best coaching record, 8–2.

Last spring Nevers hired Kunze, a 6′ 7″ lantern-jawed associate coach at East Carolina University and a native of Duluth, to come home to Minnesota and coach the Fillies into a real team. Kunze played for the University of Minnesota in the mid-'60s and after that spent a year with the doomed Minnesota Muskies of the ABA.

The Fillies approached their second season with renewed financial backing and an optimism tempered by the experiences of the first. "I thought everybody would come once and then come again," says Nevers. "But it didn't happen that way. You have to develop an identity for a product."

One way to develop such an identity is to spend a lot of money, which is what the Kicks of the NASL did when they opened for business in the Twin Cities four years ago. The Kicks' backers hired a local ad agency and then relied heavily on the ad men's advice. "The agency decided we had to sell soccer, not the Kicks," says Freddy Goodwin, the Englishman who is the team's president. "We picked a theme—Minnesota joins the world—and we advertised each game as a big event."

Except for a small profit their second year, the Kicks have yet to make money, but they've drawn large crowds from the start—they averaged 28,000 last season. Because they draw people, the Kicks also draw attention from the press and, thanks in large part to the media coverage, they draw still more people.

This happy symbiosis has so far eluded the Fillies. At the beginning, the "organization" was made up of Nevers, his office manager and right arm, 23-year-old Shirley Tesch, and the coach of the moment. There was no money for ad agencies and little for advertising, so Nevers depended on whatever publicity he could generate in the local media to draw the attention he could not afford to buy. Television and radio news shows found useful feature material in the Fillies and paid them a reasonable amount of attention. The four major newspapers—two in Minneapolis, two in St. Paul—did not. The morning Minneapolis *Tribune*, the most influential of the four, especially did not.

Before a game, Owens puts her best foot forward for trainer Linda Anderson. As Timperman (right) knows, action in the WBL can be feverish.

"Sometimes it seems totally unfair," says Fillies Forward Kathy DeBoer. "You're tired and beat up and bruised and you're awake all night because you're still so hyper, and when you open the paper in the morning, there's not even a box score saying what you did the night before."

Though Nevers has sworn off criticizing the sporting press this season, saying, "If our papers are not proud of the fact that we have one of the 12 WBL franchises, you can't make them proud," he still rankles at the treatment the Fillies have gotten—or not gotten—at the hands of sportswriters. "They began by saying we were not going to make it and then substantiated their verdict by not writing about us," he says.

Through all this, the Fillies have continued to play basketball, better this season than last and better most weeks than the week before. Kunze's coaching has been a large part of the difference. Nevers' trades have been another. The fact that the players love the game and will work hard without much urging is yet another. Last week the Fillies were still fighting the Cornets for first place and, short of an allout slump, they could wind up winning their division. They have height, strength and a number of good shooters. When they win, they usually have at least four scorers in double figures. They lack speed but they make up for it with good team play. They do not have a star, like Ann Meyers of New Jersey or Bolin of Iowa; but unlike those teams, the Fillies can go to their bench and not come up empty-handed. They are already one of the three best teams

continued

in the league, and now with Trish Roberts, a 6′ 1″ center and 1976 Olympian, back in the lineup following two knee operations last year, Minnesota should be able to handle not only Iowa but the Eastern Division-leading New York Stars as well.

In Roberts' absence, Marie Kocurek, also 6′ 1″, has been the Fillies' center. Last year she was All-Pro and Minnesota's leading scorer with 20.3 points a game. This year she has been sharing the lead with 6′ 2″ Forward Patty Montgomery from Portland, Ore. and Utah State. Kocurek, the daughter of a Corpus Christi, Texas longshoreman, was molded into a basketball player at Wayland Baptist, the longtime women's college basketball power in Plainview, Texas. She was twice an All-America and was Wayland's MVP in 1977. Montgomery, on the other hand, learned basketball on the playgrounds of Portland. She has the strength of a discus thrower and shotputter, which she was in college, and she has the instinct for being in the right place at the right time.

Though seven of the 11 Fillies are Southerners who are tormented by Minnesota's winter weather, none of them suffers louder or longer than K.O. Owens. One afternoon as she sat on a table in the locker room having her foot taped before a game, someone remarked that her legs needed shaving. Looking down, she said, "It's cold in Minnesota. I'm gonna keep everything I got."

K.O. learned her basketball and most other games as well from her older brother, Rondy, whose aim in life was to be a pitcher. "I'd catch till my hands were all red," says K.O., "and he'd say, 'If you don't keep on catchin' I'll beat you up.' So I'd be playin' and cryin' and playin' and cryin'."

Homesick during the Christmas holidays, the 6′ 5″ K.O. went back home to Roseboro, N.C., and didn't return for 13 days, missing three games. Nevers then suspended her and made her reinstatement conditional upon her paying a meaningful fine and straightening things out with her teammates, who were not happy about her absence.

For now, owner Nevers says "never say die."

DeBoer, who starts at forward opposite Montgomery, grew up in Grand Rapids, Mich., the second of five children of an academically oriented family. Her father is a professor of theology at Calvin College, her mother is a librarian. DeBoer graduated summa cum laude from Michigan State in sociology and was on her way to graduate school at the University of Oregon when the WBL was formed. She jumped at the chance to play a while longer.

DeBoer, who is 5′ 10″, would like to go to law school eventually, but intends to play basketball "until I get too small for the game or the game gets too big for me. We don't earn a lot of money (the average WBL salary is $10,000), but we make enough to get by and we're still doing the thing we like to do best." Like all the other Fillies, she puzzles a good deal over the lack of interest in the team in the Twin Cities. "We've spent our lives playing for ourselves because no one much cared," she says. "We're still doing that. Our standard line is: 'We're going to play just as hard if nobody's there.' But that's not quite true. When a gym is full, the excitement is infectious for the athletes. You think you're playing just as hard, but you're not. I understand that for this league to work, people have to be sold on women's sports. So you do a clinic somewhere or you make a speech, but you don't see results. There are not 2,000 more people there at the next game. There are maybe two. But we go ahead and do it because we know it's important."

Everybody in the Twin Cities has a different idea about why the Fillies are not a better draw. Robert T. Smith, who does a three-day-a-week general column in the *Tribune*, thinks the reason is sociological. "This is a conservative state, not politically, but in life-style," he says. "The women's movement has not done well here. The women of this state are frightened by liberation and anything that goes with it, and it spills over into sports. Their attitude is: 'What are those women doing playing a man's game?' " But Smith also has a theory that change is coming fast because of the effect Title IX legislation has had on the sports curricula in the Minnesota schools. He says, "Men like sports they have played. Girls will be like that now. You can't like something you don't know anything about. When they grow up, these girls are going to be the damnedest fans you ever saw."

With a little luck the Fillies will still be around waiting for them. **END**

Iowa fans appreciate women's basketball. As Wilson found out, they even ask for autographs.

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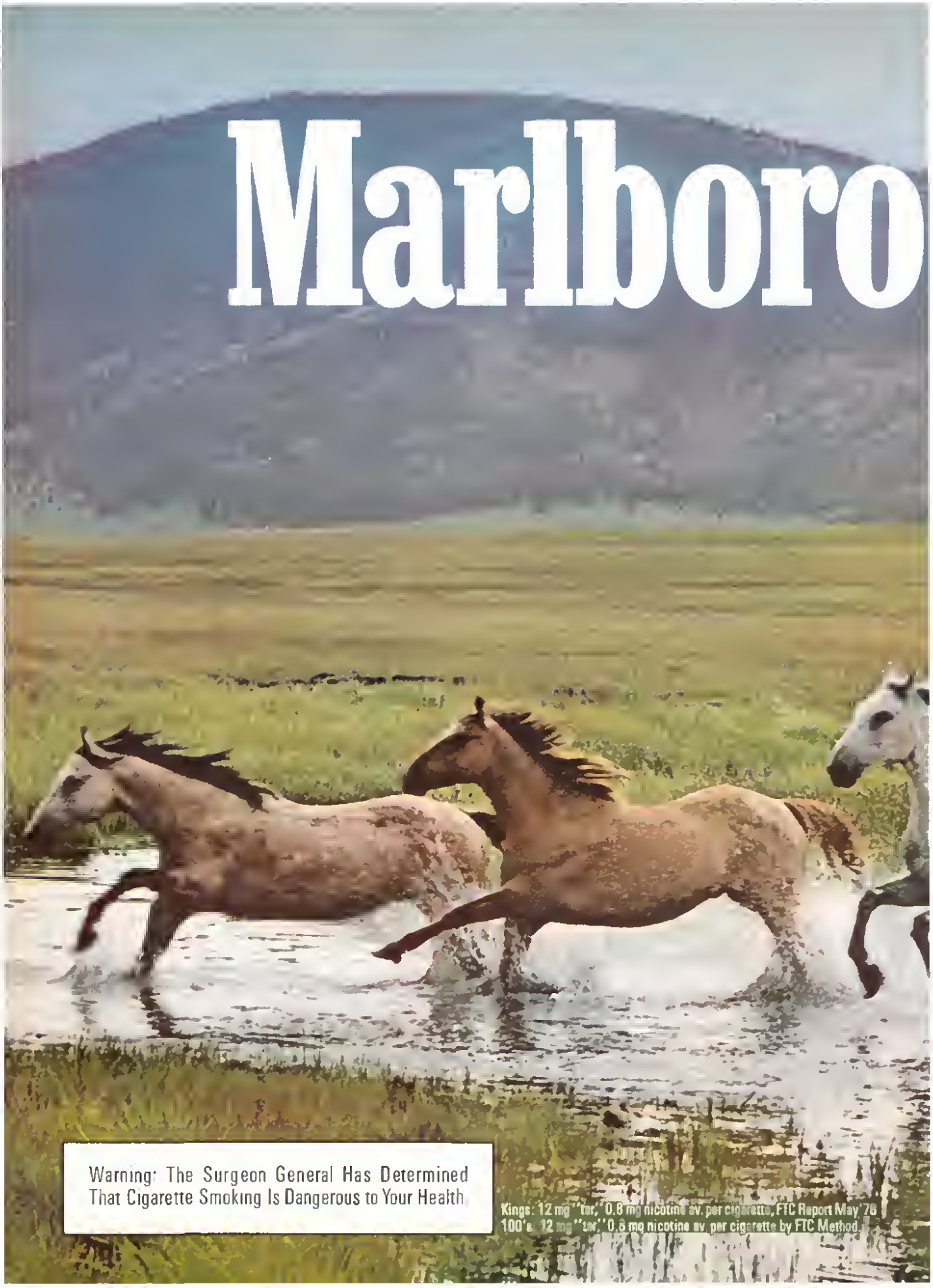
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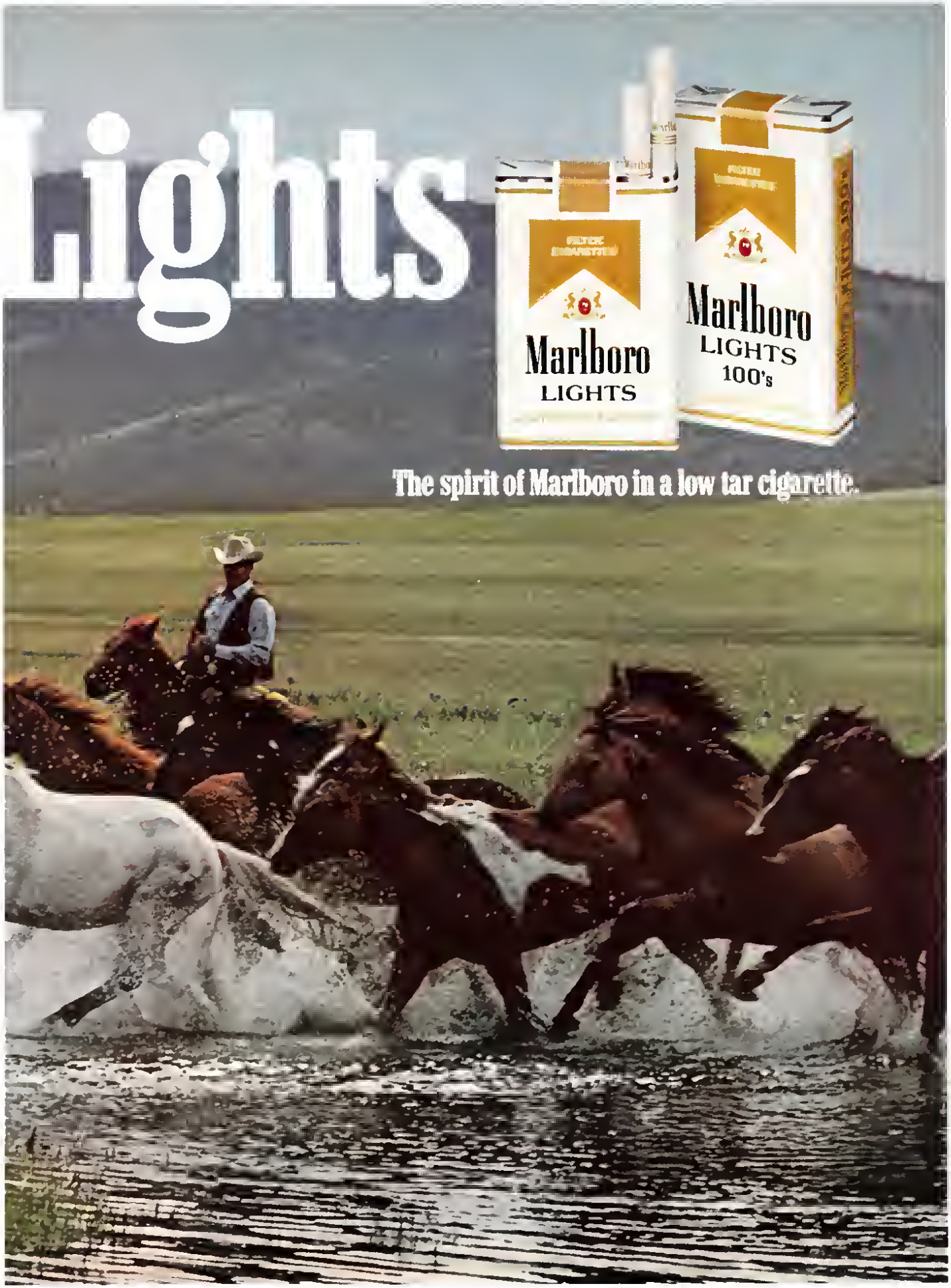
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WE'VE HAD ONE BUILT FOR YOU

by Anthony Cotton

But is the Sky the limit?

Although Weber State, 26–2, won its conference, the NCAA test lay ahead

Every day, every way, get a little better." That's what the Wildcats of Weber State College shout after every practice, with a conviction to gladden the heart of the cockeyed French optimist who said it, or something very much like it, first. But forgive them, M. Coué, for saying it with a snarl.

The Wildcats are miffed, and one really can't blame them. They don't get much attention, even at home in Utah, where Weber (say weeber, please) has long been considered the "fourth" school in the state, behind Brigham Young, Utah State and even the University of Utah.

Partly to blame for this paucity of acclaim has been a shortage of name players at Weber. BYU has Danny Ainge. Utah has Danny Vranes. Weber has players other schools passed up or didn't know existed. But what Weber has lacked in fame it has made up for in basketball victories. Since becoming a four-year college in the early '60s, this nursing and teaching school in Ogden, a city of 67,500 in the northern part of the state, has averaged almost 20 wins a year. Only once have the Wildcats had a losing season.

After practice the squad also gives a holler for each win. As of now there have been hollers for 26 such occasions this year, and the decibel level could go up as the team heads into the NCAA tournament. Weber's 26–2 mark is not only tops in the state but also one of the nation's best, something that hasn't been lost on the wire services, which have ranked the Wildcats as high as 15th.

Brigham Young, though, is considered big-time while Weber is only Big Sky, but the Cougars are in no hurry to take on the Wildcats. The teams have met only five times in 18 seasons—BYU has a 3–2 edge—and not at all in the last two. BYU Coach Frank Arnold has been quoted as saying a game with Weber would not "enhance our schedule," but Weber Coach Neil McCarthy suspects BYU may be ducking.

"When Coach Arnold took over at BYU after four years as an assistant at UCLA, we asked him if he'd like to play us on a regular basis, but he wasn't very interested," McCarthy says. "He said, 'If you beat us it makes us look bad, and if we beat you, so what.' I just said, 'Coach, you've been out of the state too long.' "

There is a chance the two schools will meet in the NCAA regionals, but first the Wildcats must get by Lamar (probable) and Oregon State (doubtful) in the first two rounds at Weber's Dee Center this week. Whatever the NCAAs bring, Wildcat fans can relish the successful defense of last season's conference championship, which Weber accomplished last Saturday night by defeating Montana 50–42.

A tall, angular team, Weber is a study in bony knees and elbows. It does not display overwhelming strength and quickness. Weber wins anyway with a disciplined, motion zone offense called the Mixer, which was devised by McCarthy.

A series of weaves, picks and back cuts, the offense is designed to free the shooter no more than 15 feet from the basket and usually in his favorite spot. Of an early-season win over Michigan State, McCarthy says, "Their matchup zone is supposed to be the best in the country, but we went over it, around it and through it." Final score: 63–61. The Mixer has churned at a 52% field-goal-shooting clip this season.

Of Weber's five starters, four have played together since their freshman year, with three coming off all-conference seasons a year ago. Senior Guard Bruce Collins is the alltime Big Sky Conference scoring leader, with 1,987 points.

Getting privy to such information is a pretty good trick outside the Wasatch Range, which is beautiful country but, unfortunately, just as dim in the national consciousness as Weber State and the Big Sky Conference. Nevertheless, conference teams are capable of holding their own and occasionally springing an upset against the UCLAs and Long Beach States in tournament play. Indeed, the Big Sky has come a long way. All eight conference teams used to play in cramped, poorly lit pits, but three of them now boast recently built domed arenas.

Former Big Sky coaches like the Washington Bullets' Dick Motta, Michigan State's Jud Heathcote and Chicago Bulls Assistant Coach Phil Johnson have made a go of it on much larger stages. Next to

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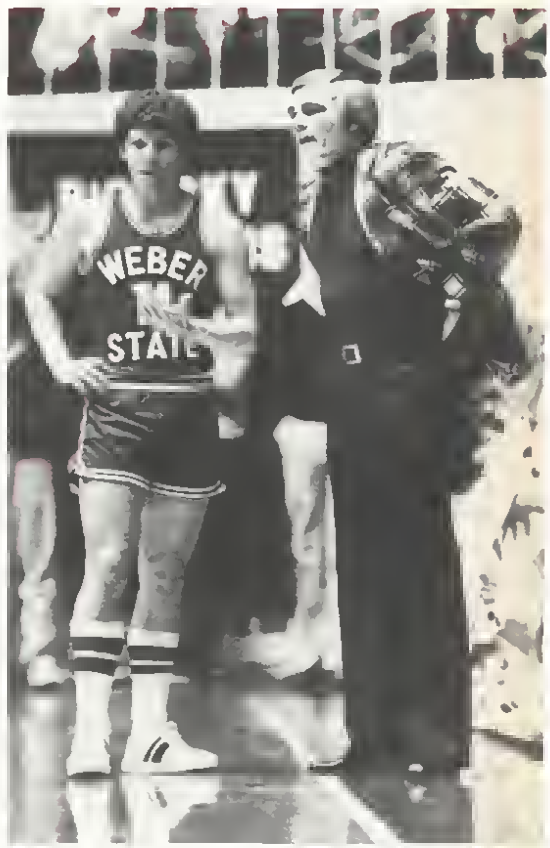

McCarthy checks Mattos, his on-court general.

move on and up may be McCarthy, a gregarious smoothie whose choice in liquid refreshment (Hi C) fits the area's Mormon life-style. But McCarthy is at ease with his more acclaimed and flamboyant colleagues.

"We don't have that big reputation in the East or Midwest, but you better believe it's just as tough to win on the road in the Big Sky as it is for teams in the ACC or Big Ten," McCarthy says. "The people in this area just go crazy. There's tremendous fan interest. I mean, what else are you going to do in Missoula, Mont.? You're gonna go down to the gym and get behind your team."

McCarthy warms to his subject. "People think of Top 20 teams as a bunch of big, physical studs, all of 'em high school All-Americas," he says. "We get the kids that the others have missed on. Collins is from Wyoming. Now, how many people are going to want to go recruiting in Wyoming in the middle of winter?

"But we're pretty to watch. Nobody in the United States plays together better than we do. You see some of these teams, and it's two passes, then whambam slams and jams. Then the coaches sit back and moan about passing. 'Where has all the passing gone? No one passes anymore.' "

Passing just happens to be an integral part of Weber State's game, and no one does it better than the Wildcats' floor general, Mark Mattos, who is averaging 7.5 assists a game.

The words used most often to describe the senior pre-med student are "cocky" and "arrogant." Those not as friendly with Mark say other things, but Mattos just shrugs off the talk.

"I don't need to be nice to anybody," he says, which could be true if you have an I.Q. of 150 and a 3.8 grade-point average, as he does. "I'd rather have people not like me and go crazy everywhere we go. People want me to do bad and see the team lose, but when things like that are against us, it makes us band together. We have a common goal of shutting those people up."

Mattos has been greeted the most strenuously at Idaho State. In his freshman year he brashly predicted a win (the Wildcats did) and a big night by Mattos (it was). From that point on, a Weber trip into Pocatello has taken on a circus atmosphere—Mattos on the high wire without a net.

Although spectators in the ISU Minidome are separated from the floor by a banked track, there is room around the court for about 200 fans. Ostensibly, admission is granted on a first-come, first-served basis, but in reality, preference is given to those with the leatheriest lungs.

Because Weber's Jan. 26 game with Idaho State would be the last trip to Pocatello in Mattos' career, the ISU students, some in T shirts that read MATTOS IS A HOT DOG, made it a special one, booing him unmercifully from the moment he led Weber onto the floor. But Mattos had the last roar. Although he took only two shots from the floor, he had 14 assists and led the Wildcats to an 83–67 romp.

After the final buzzer, Mattos turned in all four directions and waved his fists at the crowd, a gesture that said, "I can beat you every day, every way."

THE WEEK

(Feb. 25-March 2)

by HERM WEISKOPF

EAST "Now maybe you'll believe we're pretty good," Coach John Thompson told the media after his Georgetown team beat Syracuse 87–81 for the Big East title. For Thompson, irked when the wire-service polls overlooked the Hoyas after they had shocked the highly ranked Orangemen 52–50 two weeks earlier, it was a sweet victory and Georgetown's 13th straight, equaling the school record. Choosing his words carefully, Thompson refused to say he felt his squad "deserved" increased recognition, declaring, "The word is 'earned.' "

Helping Georgetown earn its triumph were tournament MVP Forward Craig Shelton, who scored 18 points, Center Ed Spriggs, who came off the Hoya bench to provide much-needed inside strength (13 points and 10 rebounds), and Guards Eric Floyd (21 points) and John Duren (12 points, seven assists), who kept the offense flowing. Syracuse was hounded into 25 turnovers, 15 of them on steals—six by Eric Smith, who also scored 17 points. Georgetown made it to the Big East finals by whipping Seton Hall 60–47 as Floyd tossed in 22 points, and by jarring St. John's 76–66, thanks to 21 points by Shelton and 20 more by Floyd. After a first-round bye, the Orangemen had unleashed their offense by walloping Connecticut 92–61.

"At halftime we just talked about punch inside, punch inside, punch inside, and that's where Gminski and Banks were operating well," explained Coach Bill Foster, whose Duke team had trailed Maryland 37–33 at the intermission of the Atlantic Coast finale. In the second half the Blue Devils did some inside punching. Gene Banks wound up with 21 points, and Mike Gminski held Buck Williams of the Terps to just one second-half rebound. Gminski finished with 13 points, including the decisive basket on a tap-in nine seconds from the end. Invaluable, too, was Vince Taylor, who scored 19 points, passed off for six assists and twice stole the ball in the final two minutes. That completed a remarkable turnaround for the Blue Devils, who had entered the tournament with five losses in their past seven games. On the way to the finals Duke defeated two other Top 20 teams, North Carolina State 68–62 and North Carolina 75–61. Against State, Banks had 24 points and Gminski 22. The Blue Devils then got 24 points and 19 rebounds from Gminski as they avenged the 25-point loss that the Tar Heels had inflicted upon them six days earlier. Maryland started off by squeezing past Georgia Tech 51–49 in overtime on a close-in shot by Albert King with only four seconds to go. King then came through with 38 points and 10 rebounds as the Terps beat Clemson 91–85.

LaSalle and Villanova won conference tournaments with three wins each. Michael Brooks pumped in a total of 51 points to lead the Explorers to the East Coast title, while the Wildcats, en route to Eastern Eight honors, got a total of 58 points and a tournament-record 39 rebounds from its standout performer, Alex Bradley.

Three Eastern collegiate AC tournaments were also settled by three-time victors. Iona, with Jeff Ruland netting 72 points and grabbing 26 rebounds, took the Metro Division championship after racking up 16 victories in a row, the longest streak in Division I. Ron Perry's 71 points helped Holy Cross come out on top in the Northern Division. Perry, a senior guard and the most prolific scorer in New England history, has now netted 2,500 points. And Ronnie Valentine ran his string of consecutive games of scoring in double figures to 100 as Old Dominion took the South title. Valentine kept his streak going in the finale against Navy when he popped in six points in overtime for a total of 14 as the Monarchs prevailed 62–51.

Princeton and Penn tied for first place in the Ivy League, forcing a playoff game this week. Superb free-throw shooting by the opposition led to a pair of overtime losses for the Quakers. Dave Blatt of the Tigers canned

continued

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all eight of his foul shots in the extra period to upend Penn 78–69. Then Columbia, which converted 29 of 32 free throws, got eight points from Richie Gordon and six from Darren Burnett in overtime to surprise the Quakers 55–51. Following a 67–47 defeat at Cornell, Princeton dumped Columbia 57–47, while Penn kept pace by drubbing the Big Red 67–42.

1.GEORGETOWN (24–5)
2.SYRACUSE (25–3) 3.DUKE (22–8)

MIDEAST Kentucky's Sam Bowie, who at one point had stood jaw-to-jaw arguing with Louisiana State's DeWayne Scales during the Southeastern Conference tournament showdown, had nothing but praise for the Tiger forward when it was all over. "Scales should be able to act as he pleases tonight," Bowie said. "He deserved the MVP award. He made shots when he couldn't even see the basket." Scales did that and more, pouring in 26 points and bringing down eight rebounds as LSU won 80–78. It was his eight points in a row that overcame a 64–63 Wildcat lead. And it was Scales' 27 points—16 in nine minutes during the second half—and 11 rebounds that did in Alabama 73–66 in the semis. Describing one of his shots, Scales said, "I got me an Astronaut [that's his nickname] slam dunk and drummed it home." In its first game of the tournament LSU drubbed Florida 95–82. For his part, Bowie scored 66 points for Kentucky, which had started the tournament by knocking off Auburn 69–61 and then laboring past Mississippi 70–67.

It was the hot shooting of Forward Kelly Tripucka that enabled Notre Dame to upset undefeated DePaul and kept the Irish from being toppled by Dayton. Tripucka flicked in eight of his 28 points as Notre Dame sped to a 12–4 advantage over the Blue Demons. DePaul, down 32–31 at halftime, went in front with an 8–0 spurt after the intermission, then fell behind 45–43 when the Irish ran off 11 straight points. The score was 64–64 at the end of regulation time and 70–70 after Rich Branning of Notre Dame hit on a jumper with seven seconds left in the first of two extra periods. Orlando Woolridge of the Irish scored the game's decisive two points on foul shots with 19 seconds to go, for a 76–74 decision that ended DePaul's 26-game winning streak. It was the fifth time in 12 years that a team ranked No. 1 had lost at South Bend. Tripucka then scored 22 points as the Irish (22–5) held off Dayton 62–54. DePaul won its next outing as Mark Aguirre, who had 28 points at Notre Dame, pumped in 40 during a 97–81 romp over Illinois State. On the Blue Demon bench for that game was Center Jim Mitchem, who the day before the Notre Dame contest had slipped on ice and fractured a bone in his left hand, an injury that limited him to two points.

Two wings and Center Jonathan Moore helped Furman take the Southern Conference playoffs by beating Marshall 80–62. With the wings—Michael Hunt and Ronald White—playing two steps farther down the baseline in the second half, the Paladins overcame a 36–32 halftime deficit. Hunt finished with 22 points, White with 16 and Moore with 16, plus 11 rebounds. For the second year in a row Moore was the tournament's MVP. He also became the first player ever named four consecutive times to the all-Southern and all-tournament squads.

In the Mid-American Conference Toledo beat Bowling Green 85–70, Jim Swaney scoring 31 points, Harvey Knuckles adding 20 and Dick Miller latching on to 20 missed shots. The Rockets (23–5) knocked off Ball State in the semifinals as Swaney tossed in 27 points and Knuckles 26. Murray State and Western Kentucky, which tied for first in the Ohio Valley, met for the tournament title. Western downed Murray for the third time, coming back for a 54–51 victory after trailing 31–19 at halftime. Led by MVP Edmund Sherod, fifth-seeded Virginia Commonwealth took the Sun Belt tournament. Sherod scored a total of 68 points, 19 as the Rams beat top-seeded South Alabama 74–72 and 22 as they defeated Alabama-Birmingham 105–88 in the finals.

1.DePAUL (26–1)
2.LSU (24–5) 3.INDIANA (20–7)

MIDWEST "I knew we were flat as we walked down the runway to the court," Kansas Coach Ted Owens said after the Big Eight tournament final game against Kansas State. Flat, indeed; as flat as the unfortunate Jayhawk doll that was slammed to the floor by Wildcat cheerleaders at halftime. Even the printed signs that were flashed from the Kansas bench to designate plays, such as 3 SCREEN could do nothing to revive the fading Jayhawks, who lost 79–58. Kansas may well have suffered a downer after having stunned regular-season champ Missouri 80–71 the night before. For K-State, Guard Rolando Blackman's 22 points, Forward Ed Nealy's 17 and Coach Jack Hartman's "green zone" defense were decisive. Hartman also has blue, red and brown zones. Nealy, who came into the tournament in a dreadful shooting slump, got hot and made good on a Big Eight-record 17 consecutive field-goal tries during one stretch as the Wildcats won three games. All told, Nealy hit on 22 of 29 shots, scored 52 points, pulled down 29 rebounds and had seven assists. MVP Blackman scored a tournament-record 60 points, snatched 16 rebounds and fed off for seven assists. Kansas State barely survived the semifinals, nipping Nebraska 60–59 when Blackman scored a basket with 18 seconds remaining and then blocked the final shot by the Huskers.

"Our press gets to people only when we really jump in their shirts, and that's what we started doing," said Guard Jerry Eaves after Louisville overcame Florida State 81–72 in the Metro Conference tournament title game. The Seminoles led 42–35 early in the second half when the Cardinals began to apply their devastating shirt-to-shirt pressure. During the next 5:39 Louisville outscored State 20–3, Poncho Wright flipping in nine Cardinal points and Darrell Griffith eight. Griffith, the tournament MVP, had 30 points in the game.

When Texas A&M Guard David Britton was not exasperating Arkansas with his shooting during the wrap-up of the Southwest Conference playoffs, he did it with his ball handling. Britton fired in 23 points, 17 in the second half, and put on a virtuoso dribbling and passing performance when the Aggies went into their four-corner delay with 11:57 to be played. The Razorbacks serambled back in the waning moments, but A&M hung on for a 52–50 verdict. In the semifinals the Aggies defeated Texas Tech 61–51 behind Vernon Smith's 20 points and Arkansas skimmed past Texas 64–62 as U. S. Reed scored 25 points.

Bradley, which earlier seemed to be going nowhere fast—the Braves were 5–6 in December after tying for last place in the Missouri Valley the season before—completed a dazzling comeback. The Braves wound up in first place this time and earned their first NCAA berth since 1955 by winning the conference tournament. Bradley brought its season's record to 23–9 with three victories during the playoffs, the last a 62–59 decision over West Texas State in which Mitchell Anderson came through with 16 points and 12 rebounds.

Larry Smith, as usual, was very busy as Alcorn State took the Southwestern AC playoffs. During a 116–92 victory over Southern University, Smith had 27 points and 20 rebounds. In the finals against Grambling, Smith scored 16 points and got 19 boards to lead the Braves to another lopsided triumph, this time by an 81–63 margin.

Other conference tournament champions were Centenary in the Trans America and Oral Roberts in the Midwestern City.

1.LOUISVILLE (28–3)
2.TEXAS A&M (24–7) 3.MISSOURI (23–5)

WEST "I told my players to go home and pray to the Man Upstairs," said Oregon State Coach Ralph Miller after a 52–51 triumph over California. "He was more responsible for this win than anything we did." That was small comfort for the Golden Bears, who exploited gaping holes in the Beavers' zone defense but missed two last-minute chances for an upset. With six seconds left, Cal Guard Phil Wilhite cut loose with a pass intended for Walt Gillespie, who was all alone under the basket. The Bears' Doug True, thinking the pass was meant for him, leapt at the ball, it struck his hand and

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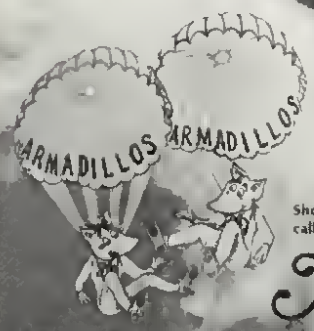

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was deflected out of bounds. A traveling violation by State with two seconds to go gave Cal the ball for one last shot. Air ball.

Cal's misses plus Washington State's 71–58 defeat of Arizona State locked up the Pac-10 title for Oregon State. The Cougars knocked the Sun Devils out of a first-place tie as Forward Don Collins popped in 21 points. Collins then scored 19 more and Stuart House 35 as Washington State (22–5) stopped Arizona 74–71. That left Collins with 422 points in Pac-10 play, a single-season record that surpassed the 406 scored in 1953 by Washington's Bob Houbregs. A 75–61 victory over Washington enabled Arizona State (21–6) to cling to second place.

As for Oregon State, the Beavers took their final game from Oregon 67–55 behind Steve Johnson's 19 points and 11 rebounds, an effort that left Coach Miller smiling. For years Miller has been a stoneface, but with four seconds to go he turned to the student section at Oregon State and, as he had promised he would if his team finished first, broke into a broad grin.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

DeWAYNE SCALES: Louisiana State's 6′ 9″ junior forward carried the Tigers to three victories and the SEC playoff championship with an MVP performance that included a total of 68 points, 26 rebounds and three steals.

Brigham Young was all smiles while winning twice. Up and down the court the Cougars zipped in their scurrying, almost pell-mell style, shooting 580 from the floor and picking off 42 more rebounds than their opponents. Hawaii was trampled 107–82 as Devin Durrant netted 27 points and Danny Ainge 22. Then San Diego State took it on the chin 114–81 as Ainge scored 30 points, Scott Runia 22 and Fred Roberts 21. In that game, BYU's Alan Taylor grabbed a Marriott Center-record 23 rebounds.

New Mexico, buffeted by troubles all season, suffered the final blow. Guard Kenny Page kept the Lobos in front of UTEP until the end in a Western AC battle, but then came a last-second 20-foot net-cutter by Center Anthony Burns that sent New Mexico to a 68–67 loss.

One of the biggest playoff surprises was San Jose State's triumph in the Pacific Coast AA. The Spartans, who finished in fourth place at the end of the regular season, bumped off UC-Santa Barbara 73–66, first-place Utah State 94–68 and second-place Long Beach State 57–55 to take the conference title.

San Francisco clinched the West Coast AC crown by defeating Portland 81–58 and Seattle 71–59.

1.OREGON STATE (26–3)
2.BYU (24–4) 3.WEBER STATE (26–2)

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by Joe Marshall

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Earl Bell (vertical) and Larry Myricks (horizontal) measured up in the Garden

Myricks' 26' 11½" leap was all but unwatched

Last Friday night in Madison Square Garden the officials for the USA Indoor Track and Field Championships had presented Earl Bell with a dilemma. Bell had just won the pole vault by sailing over a bar he thought was positioned at 18' 1", the same height as Dan Ripley's 1979 meet record. That had been the only time all night that Bell had cleared the bar. He hadn't bothered with any practice jumps, had missed twice at his opening height of 17' 8½" and had decided to forgo his third attempt at that height to take a single whack at 18' 1". But in remeasuring to certify Bell's tying of the meet record, the officials discovered that the bar was not at 18' 1" but at 18' 2¼"—the highest first clearance ever and, of course, a meet record. "Well, what d'ya know," said Bell.

Thus arose Bell's dilemma. The very officials who had measured the bar at two different heights just moments before were now asking him how high he wanted the bar set for his next attempt. Bell decided to try to break the indoor world of 18' 6" set by Konstantin Volkov of the U.S.S.R. last month. In the pole vault, world records usually progress in fractions of an inch, so Bell wanted the bar set at 18' 6½". But dare he request such a precise measurement from officials who had managed to be 1¼" off on his last vault?

Perhaps he should simply have the bar moved to 18' 5" in the hope that it would remeasure out at better than 18' 6". But then again the officials might go the other way, and he could end up with a surprise in reverse. After all, just the previous weekend in San Francisco, Bell had been given an ovation when he apparently had become the first man to vault 18 feet in the Cow Palace. But a remeasurement of the height came out at 17' 10½". To play it safe, therefore, perhaps Bell should now ask that the bar be raised to 19 feet; that way he would have such a wide margin for error that the bar certainly would still be above 18' 6" even after the officials had at it.

This dilemma proving hopelessly unsolvable, Bell simply asked for 18' 6½", crossed his fingers and readied himself for three tries at a world record.

Bell's vaulting brought a brief spark of life to a lackluster meet that had been billed as "America's Epic Athletics Event." That's not athletic, mind you, but athletics, as in the Athletics Congress, the newly formed body that has taken over the management of track and field in America from the AAU, as well as the running of these annual indoor competitions, which used to be known as the AAU indoor championships. But as has so frequently been the case in the past, the most epic thing about this year's meet was the list of no-shows. This time around, the roll of the missing included hurdlers Renaldo Nehemiah and Greg Foster, milers Steve Scott and Don Paige, high-jumper Joni Huntley and middle-distance runners Mary Decker, Francie Larrieu and Jan Merrill.

While the field may have been missing many stars, there were some noteworthy performances. Rod Milburn, 29, capped his comeback season from pro exile by winning the 60-yard hurdles, Texas A&M football star Curtis Dickey took the 60-yard dash in a blazing 6.09; Eamonn Coghlan won the three-mile in 13:02.8, nearly five seconds faster than Tracy Smith's 1973 meet and U.S. record; and a Philadelphia Pioneer Club sprint medley relay team turned a blistering world-record 2:01, highlighted by Herman Frazier's unofficial 20.9 220-yard third leg. Before the competition began, a representative of the Athletics Congress had, at the request of the athletes, phoned the White House to invite President Carter to attend the meet and discuss the Olympic boycott. The President was another no-show, so in lieu of a direct encounter, the competitors drew up a petition, just as they had at the earlier meets this season. Only instead of supporting the boycott, their petition opposed it. And many American athletes signed it.

Perhaps Evelyn Ashford best summed up the athletes' growing frustration while also explaining their generally flat performances since the boycott was proposed on Jan. 20. "All the talk of the boycott has really taken a lot out of me," she said after winning the women's 60-yard dash in 6.76 seconds. "I've been pretty depressed. It's been difficult. Realistically, I know we probably won't go to Moscow. I'm still hoping—I have to hold on to that hope. But it has affected

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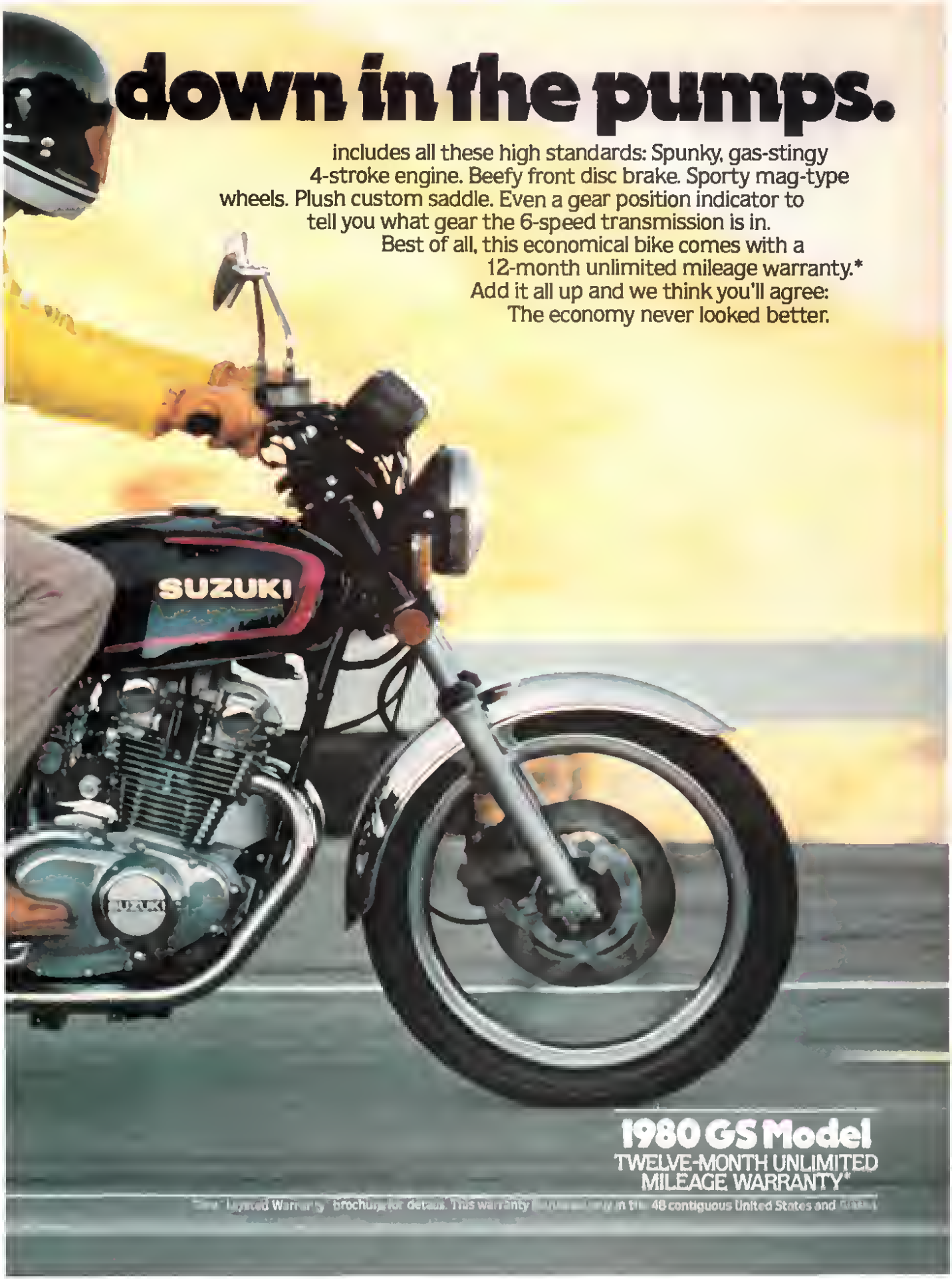
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me. I don't have a goal anymore. I don't know what to do now. I've tried to set new goals, but the Olympic Games were going to be everything."

Another competitor who had been focusing all his energy toward Moscow was long-jumper Larry Myricks—and with good reason. Myricks made the U.S. Olympic team in 1976 but broke an ankle in Montreal while warming up. He has been waiting for a second chance ever since, and after winning last year's World Cup at 27′ 11½″, the second-longest jump in history to Bob Beamon's 29′ 2½″, it appeared that he would go to Moscow as the favorite for the gold medal. But as if the boycott weren't frustrating enough, Myricks discovered last week that he couldn't even get a moment in the spotlight at his own national indoor championship.

Myricks was one of the star attractions at the Garden. One could easily argue that he has been the top American male on the indoor circuit this year. In January at a meet in Johnson City, Tenn., he broke Beamon's 12-year-old indoor world mark of 27′ 2¾″ by three inches. Two weeks ago in San Diego he increased the record to 27′ 6″. But last Friday, the long jump was scheduled at 3 p.m., when almost no one but other athletes could be in attendance.

Among the multitude that didn't get to see Myricks jump were his parents, who had flown in from Jackson, Miss. After calling the Garden and being assured that no finals would take place before 7 p.m., they spent part of the day with relatives in New Jersey. Still, they headed for the meet early. Fighting traffic and ticket lines, they finally entered the arena about 5 p.m., moments after their son had won his second straight indoor title with a 26′ 11½″ leap.

"Are you gonna jump again?" asked Myricks' 6-year-old cousin, who had come along from New Jersey. When Myricks shook his head, she asked plaintively, "Why not?" She should have asked the Athletics Congress.

"I've gotten used to this," said Myricks, a soft-spoken 23-year-old who works as a recreation specialist in Florida. "I've been jumping well for four years now, and I've never gotten the recognition I think I've deserved."

In contrast, almost four years have gone by since Bell last vaulted really well. In 1976, at the age of 20, he held the outdoor world record of 18′ 7¼″. Even then he was a veteran. He had vaulted almost all his life back home in Jonesboro, Ark., where his 57-year-old father, William, a pathologist, still vaults as a hobby. When Earl and his three brothers were youngsters, their father would handmake poles for them because none were commercially available that were flexible enough to be handled by 80- to 90-pound vaulters. Dr. Bell would start by rolling craft paper to the desired diameter and then he would wrap the paper tube with fiber glass cloth purchased at Sears, eyeballing it to what looked to be the right thickness and binding it all together with a coating of resin. Through trial and error, he learned how to use these materials to produce precise degrees of flexibility and strength. When he was 14 and weighed nearly 100 pounds, Earl set a state junior high school record of 12′ 7½″ with his first store-bought pole.

Bell lost his world record at the '76 Olympic Trials when Dave Roberts cleared 18′ 8¼″, still the world's standard. He then finished sixth in Montreal and followed that with two poor seasons, during which he suffered pain in his back and left side. By the end of 1978 his left leg hurt so much that he could hardly jog. In early 1979 Pasadena chiropractor Dr. Leroy Perry discovered the cause when he measured Bell and found that his left leg was ⅝ of an inch shorter than his right. To compensate, Bell gradually built up the heel of his left shoe, so that now when he is vaulting he appears to be wearing one track flat and one slightly out-of-style wedgie. At the moment this ⅝-inch buildup has placed Bell in violation of an international track rule that specifies a limit of about ½ inch (13 mm). The rule was written to prevent athletes from gaining height and spring by building up both shoes. Bell has appealed his case. "I'm not trying to cheat," he pleads. "I just want two legs that are the same length. And there's no way I can cut the other one down."

This year Bell moved from Arkansas to Live Oak, Calif., on the Feather River north of Sacramento, where he is training under Dick Tomlinson, a sometime pole-vault coach who manages a kiwi farming corporation. A kiwi is a tart, egg-shaped fruit brought to America from New Zealand and so little known in the U.S. that Bell occasionally lists his affiliation as the Whatsakiwi Track Club. Tomlinson has improved Bell's technique, with gratifying results. In 1980 Bell has been the most consistent U.S. vaulter—and the loftiest, with an 18′ 3½″ jump last month in Winnipeg. Not that training has come easy. A recent flood picked up Bell's homemade wooden runway and carried it off, "possibly to the Pacific," he says. The foam rubber landing pad also floated away, but Tomlinson hopped in a rowboat, chased the 14′ x 16′ pad down and tied it to a tree.

Such trials and tribulations no doubt deserve an indoor world record, but Bell will have to wait a little while longer to get his. He failed on all three attempts at the Garden, which is just as well because if he had cleared the bar it probably would have been remeasured at 18′ 5¾″. No matter. With his single successful jump, Bell set a meet record, won his first national indoor championship, got the evening's biggest roar from the Garden crowd and proved that he can measure up to the best in the world. **END**

Bell cleared a meet-record 18′ 1″—oops, 18′ 2¼″

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The shrink of the drink

The use of a psychologist is among the different strokes making Iowa a power

They might all stretch out on their backs, point to spots just below their navels and mentally try to move their brains down into their abdomens. Or, they might make animal noises—oinks and squeals and growls and grunts. Or, they might close their eyes and transport themselves to a beach in the Caribbean or into the future. They are not into est, TM or primal scream therapy. Their thing is swimming for the University of Iowa and they are preparing themselves to win.

For most of the '60s and '70s the Iowa swimmer was seen as this poor guy dog-paddling along in the wake of his opponents, hoping he would reach the wall before drowning. The Hawkeyes finished last or next to last in the Big Ten for 10 straight years between 1967 and 1976. Faded and nearly forgotten were the triumphs of the past: Iowa's Wally Ris winning gold medals in the 100-meter free and 800-meter free at the '48 Olympics and the butterfly stroke being invented in the Field House Pool in 1934.

But this season Iowa has won four out of four relay or invitational meets and all eight of its dual meets, including a 79–34 victory over defending NCAA-champion California and a 76–37 defeat of perennial Big Ten power Indiana.

Most of the credit for the turnaround goes to Glenn Patton, who took over as coach in 1976. But the Sigmund Freud Trophy must go to Dr. Eugene Gauron, the swimmers' shrink, who has proved that a team can profit from having both a head coach and a *head* coach.

"The biggest untapped area in athletics is mental training," says Patton, "and before the 1980s end, I think every major sports university is going to have a full-time psychologist on its staff."

Mental training seems to be almost as important to the Iowa swimmers as the time they spend in the water or lifting weights. Gauron, 44, an Iowa psychology professor with a soothing voice, meets with them three times a week and attends all their meets. He receives no pay—though the athletic department gives him his traveling expenses—but likes working with athletes so well that he is now holding sessions with Iowa's women golfers as well.

"It's one of the most creative things I've done in my life," Gauron says. "It's an adventure in the exploration of human potential."

Gauron tries a great variety of things at the meetings, which sometimes resemble the group-therapy sessions he supervises elsewhere around Iowa City. Recently, for instance, he read aloud from a book about the samurai, who used mental training a thousand years ago. Then he told the swimmers to write papers on how they will feel when—not if—they win the Big Ten Conference meet at Michigan this weekend. During another session he showed them a photo of the Michigan pool, so they could more easily visualize where they are going to outswim the competition.

"If you think, 'All right, this guy is very good, he's going to beat me,' then that's it, he's going to beat you," says Gauron. "If you say to yourself, 'I'm very good. I'm an excellent swimmer. I can beat this guy,' that's what will happen, too. Of course, it depends on the swimmer's talent. There's got to be some reality element involved. Then, within those confines, you can be confident."

Gauron has read every book he could find on sports psychology, but he hasn't consulted the psychologists who have worked with the Indiana basketball, California swimming and Colorado State skiing teams. He has just dived in and developed his own techniques or adopted ideas he's found in the meager literature on sports psychology available in the U.S. Unfortunately, the results of extensive psychological experimentation done in the U.S.S.R. and East Germany are largely unavailable for study.

continued

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Gauron helps the Hawkeyes win by transporting their minds to the Caribbean—or into the future

Gauron is fond of telling the Hawkeye swimmers how mental training has helped him in his own athletic pursuits: tennis, swimming, cross-country skiing, bowling. He will have them close their eyes and mentally scan their bodies, looking for—and then relaxing—areas of tension. At the start of the season, shortly after Patton had asked Gauron to join his staff, some of the swimmers snoozed when they should have scanned, but now most of them have learned to relax without dropping off.

Patton thinks the psychologist's most important contributions come just before a meet. Because their sessions with Gauron have made the swimmers acutely sensitive to their state of mind and body, they can describe to Gauron in considerable detail how they're feeling. One might say his long intestine seems to be tied in a square knot, another might feel as if he's facing something as tedious as a lecture on gladioli. Gauron then gives them mental exercises to lift or drop themselves to that ideal point where they are both calm and psyched up.

Sometimes Patton and Gauron can read the collective psyche of the team, as they did before the season's first dual meet against Indiana. Before Gauron, a typical Patton premeet pep talk for such an occasion would have been, "O.K. now the key is the 400 meters. We've got to win that first one." This season, he turned the petrified swimmers over to Gauron, who told some corny jokes and led a chorus of animal noises.

"I think I'd have been scared to death if Gene Gauron hadn't shown up and relaxed us," freshman backstroke star Tom Roemer told the Des Moines *Register* after the meet. "I was afraid it might be like my first meet as a sophomore in high school when I got disqualified on false starts. But he told some jokes, made us laugh and did different things to ease the tension. When the meet started I was more relaxed than I'd ever been before."

Iowa not only won by 39 points but also its swimmers achieved 16 lifetime-best performances, including a 1:52.63 by Roemer in the 200-yard backstroke. It was only the 10th dual-meet loss in 23 years for Indiana Coach Doc Counsilman, who got his Ph.D. in exercise physiology at Iowa.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICH CLARKSON

The doctor has a hand in the swimmers' success but can't get a grip on himself for basketball

Patton, 37, a Division II All-America distance freestyler at Springfield College and national junior-college coach of the year three straight years at Alfred (N.Y.) Tech before coming to Iowa, is what every coach claims to be but often isn't, a "tireless recruiter." Most every night at their home in Iowa City's Mosquito Flats section—it's close to the Iowa River—his wife Joyce sews as Patton runs up a mammoth phone bill talking to prospects.

He didn't have much luck when he first arrived and had to pack his team with foreigners, such as Olympic freestylers Bent Brask of Norway and Brett Naylor of New Zealand, who takes his practice laps wearing three women's swimsuits—in drag to increase the drag. Each recruiting crop has been better than its predecessor, and the current freshman contingent features Roemer, an Iowa-bred predental major who was sought by Indiana, USC, Arizona and Tennessee. He is already the school record holder in the 100- and 200-yard backstroke and the 200-yard individual medley.

Patton figures the Hawkeyes have enough talent to fight it out with Indi-

continued

ana and Michigan for first place in the Big Ten meet, where individual performances will count more heavily than the team depth that served Iowa so well in dual meets. Patton also predicts a 12th-place finish for the Hawkeyes at the NCAAs on March 27-29 at Harvard—maybe even 10th if Gauron turns the swimmers into samurai.

In addition to Iowa's improving record, recruiting has been helped by last summer's $400,000 renovation of the Field House Pool, which was built during the Coolidge administration. Patton, who is cocky enough to hand out golf tees imprinted with "Patton Pending #1" and not the sort of person to understate anything, says Iowa now has the fastest pool in the Big Ten.

Patton loves to experiment. He has one of his backstrokers, Steve Harrison of England, stay underwater for three-quarters of the pool's length at the start of his races, because Patton thinks he swims faster than if he stays on the surface. He believes that U.S. coaches, himself included, have been overworking sprinters, and he has cut their weekly mileage from as much as 70,400 yards to as little as 21,120. For the Big Ten meet and the NCAAs he will outfit his swimmers in nylon-mesh peekaboo suits.

Patton's an experimenter—and exaggerator.

"We did some studies on them," he says. "Looked at them underwater and compared them to other suits. The water and air flow in and flow right out. No bagginess. I think it's the fastest suit in the world."

In searching for an edge, Patton has not overlooked the University of Iowa Hospital, the largest school-owned teaching hospital in the world. The cardiology department checks his swimmers before, during and after the season.

And at the school's Hydraulics Research East Annex, across the Iowa River from the main campus, Patton and Dr. Edmund Burke, who is working at Iowa on a grant from the National Institutes of Health, have latched on to an environmental flume usually used for hydraulic tests. They convinced the school to put in a glass wall and make some other adjustments so that Hawkeye swimmers can climb into the 60-foot-long tank and battle against currents flowing at as much as 8½ feet per second, sort of like salmon swimming upstream to spawn. While a swimmer struggles to stay in the same place in the flume—in front of the glass, Patton hopes—various tests and movies can be made to help analyze his stroke and position in the water.

"Since I've come to Iowa I've felt that we could duplicate here, with our swimmers, what the East Germans and Russians are doing," says Patton. "Physiological testing, psychology testing and the feeding of this information into computers and getting readouts."

Patton is nothing if not a big thinker. "When I'm 60 years old I hope that I'll be looked upon as one of the top coaches in the world"—and with the help of science, he just might reach that goal. Certainly the employment of a psychological coach is already paying off.

Some of the mental training has even rubbed off on Patton, who sits in on all of Gauron's sessions. "It's sort of weird," says sophomore freestyler Scott Wisner. "When I first met Coach Patton he would be pacing up and down the pool deck at meets. And then for Indiana, our first meet of the year and the biggest of his career, he was real calm and confident. It was a real turnabout."

Gauron himself seems to be the sort of fellow who could amble around the battlements of a besieged fort, making small talk with the soldiers while shells fall all about them. Before the Iowa-Iowa State meet one of his swimmers went to him and said, "I wanted to come over and sit next to our center of calmness."

But Gauron is human. His wife Pat reports that he is a maniac at Hawkeye basketball games, so much so that a friend bought him a scorebook to keep him busy and calm him down. **END**

Like salmon going upstream, swimmers fight the flume, spawning a new way to analyze strokes.

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NOBODY'S BIGGER THAN JUMBO

For 45 years, James Francis Elliott has been coach of track at Villanova, bringing home more silverware than he knows what to do with. And it's only a part-time job

by RICK TELANDER

CONTINUED

This raw, wintry day James Francis (Jumbo) Elliott, 64, the Philadelphia millionaire, drives rather than walks through the yard of Elliott and Frantz, Inc. heavy-equipment sales company. A light snow has turned the back lot into a quagmire. "We plan to have it repaved next summer," Jumbo says apologetically. Elliott's car creeps past the monsters that are his stock-in-trade: fluorescent-green, 35-ton Euclid trucks, cherry-red Drott cranes, taxicab-yellow Fiat-Allis loaders—dense, inert vehicles nesting in the ooze. "The really big ones come on semis and are assembled here," says Jumbo. "Some of the tires alone are 10 feet high."

Elliott walks into his office, sits down at the desk and hums as he rubber-stamps his name on $26,000 worth of payroll checks. He comes in for only a few hours a day now, and signing checks is one of his duties. Nowadays the business runs largely on its own momentum, but that wasn't always the case. "God, no," says Jumbo, a gentleman in all things, but one who uses a dash of blasphemy for effect. Fifty years ago he was a stock boy in a grocery store in Philadelphia's Shantytown; 35 years ago he was a foreman of a small construction company; 25 years ago he was a salesman for the company, later he became a partner in it; and eight years ago he bought out his partner. Now there are Elliott and Frantz franchises in three states, with 140 employees and annual sales of $25 million.

On the walls of Elliott's office are photographs of athletes running and a painting of a great, somber, bearded man—God, obviously—peering out of the clouds and obviously displeased as a golfer moves his ball from behind a bush. Golf is one of Jumbo's passions. In 1934 and '35 he was captain of Villanova University's golf team. He was undefeated in his intercollegiate career, and he was urged to join the pro tour after graduation. Now Elliott belongs to several country clubs around Philadelphia and owns a condominium near the 13th hole of the Seminole golf course in Juno Beach, Fla.

A lean, almost gaunt man with a fleshy face that seems meant for a heavier frame, Jumbo is reputed to have a mighty tee shot still. "A friend of mine always said he'd bet I could outdrive anybody else who had wrists as skinny as mine," he says. Jumbo holds out his wrists and they are indeed narrow, delicate, decidedly un-Jumbo-like. (The "Jumbo" handle was not acquired for anatomical reasons. It was picked up in the 1930s; a man named Jumbo Jim Elliott pitched for the Phillies then. "Since I was a Jim Elliott, too, I got the name and it stuck," he says.)

Jumbo's eldest son, James Elliott Jr., 33, vice-president/general manager of Elliott and Frantz, enters the office and pulls a pitching wedge from the bag of clubs behind his father's desk. Another son, Tom, 29, also works at Elliott and Frantz, as a vice-president. As James Jr. practices his backswing, he and his father discuss the political problems in Afghanistan and Iran. World affairs are of more than passing interest to the Elliotts these days—one of their sales agents in Iran disappeared for a while during the revolution there. Upon resurfacing, the agent informed the company that $50,000 worth of their tractor parts were in the hands of the new government.

"Are we going to get caught on that?" Jumbo asks now.

"I already wrote it off," says Jim Jr., "but I've heard we might eventually get paid by some West German bank. You don't mind if we get it in deutschmarks, do you, Dad?"

Jumbo chuckles. Such relatively small amounts of money are not terribly important to him at this stage in his career.

It is nearly three o'clock now and Jumbo is finishing work for the day. He gets into his Cadillac to drive the short distance to Villanova, the small (enrollment 6,075), private, Catholic Church-affiliated university from which he graduated 45 years ago. It is at Villanova, on Philadelphia's fashionable Main Line, that Elliott engages in what has been his "hobby" for four and a half decades. Like a comic book hero emerging from a phone booth, Jumbo, the successful businessman, family man, amateur golfer and lifetime Philadelphian, steps out of his car in the school's parking lot and takes on a new identity—that of the most successful collegiate track coach in U.S. history.

Indeed, if coaching achievement were measured in business terms, Jumbo Elliott would be no mere millionaire, but a Rockefeller, a Howard Hughes. In the last 25 years his Villanova track and cross-country teams have won almost 50 major championships, indoors and out: eight NCAAs, three AAUs, one USTFF and 38 IC4As (the 105-member Eastern track association). During his tenure 300 Villanova athletes have won individual or relay championships at IC4A meets, 74 have won them at the NCAAs, 63 at the AAUs. Last spring Villanova won its 71st relay title since 1955 at the prestigious Penn Relays, far outdistancing the host team, the University of

Elliott may begin his day by paying a little attention

Pennsylvania, as the alltime leader.

Jumbo has coached 25 Olympians, who have won six gold and three silver medals. Either while at Villanova or afterward, 18 of his athletes have set outdoor world records and 44 have set world indoor marks. Last season alone, junior Don Paige set a world indoor record for an 11-lap track at 1,000 yards (2:05.3); sophomore Anthony Tufariello established an NCAA indoor mark in the 600 (1:09.5); sophomore Sydney Maree, from South Africa, set a national collegiate record in the 1,500 meters (3:38.2) and an outdoor NCAA mark in the 5,000 (13:20.7); and alumnus Eamonn Coghlan shattered the world indoor mile record with a time of 3:52.6. The record Coghlan broke (3:54.9) was held by another former Villanova runner, Dick Buerkle.

Jumbo admits to having a fondness for middle-distance men. Indeed, he has coached 16 Villanova athletes who have broken four minutes in the mile, a feat roughly akin to having coached 16 All-America halfbacks. One of those, Ron Delany of Ireland, won the Olympic gold in the 1,500 in 1956. Others, such as Marty Liquori, Frank Murphy, Buerkle and Coghlan, have been in the forefront of world-class miling over the last decade. The 1980 Villanova squad has four runners—Paige, Maree, Dean Childs and Amos Korir of Kenya—who have clocked sub-four-minute miles. Two others, Kevin Dillon from Canada and Carey Pinkowski, should break four minutes soon.

This is not to say that Elliott ignores his sprinters and field men. Eight of the nine Olympic medals won by Villanovans have been taken by sprinters (Charley Jenkins, Paul Drayton, Larry James), a hurdler (Erv Hall) and a pole vaulter (Don Bragg).

And the juggernaut continues to roll. Last year's Villanova team won the IC4A Indoor Championships for the 16th time and the NCAA Indoor Championships for the third time. In May, Villanova finished second to the University of Texas at El Paso in the NCAA Outdoor Championships. All but four members of that team are back this year. "Jumbo's had the horses before, but he's got depth now. This may be his best team ever," says James, gold medalist in the 4 x 400-meter relay and a silver medalist in the 400 in the 1968 Olympics and now the track coach at Stockton (N.J.) State College, where Bragg is the athletic director.

Just as important to the school as Elliott's stats, however, is his very presence on campus. Without a man who could afford to coach for the love of it, Villanova quite possibly would not have a track program at all, let alone the success it enjoys. Like all private colleges today, the school is beset with financial problems.

"We're marginal," says the Rev. John M. Driscoll, Villanova's president. "To be honest, no sport is financially viable here. But in a competitive business like ours it is important to keep your school's name in the forefront. And the most fantastic press we get, year in and year out, comes from Jumbo and his teams. If it weren't for him and his peculiar genius, things would be very much different here."

For the record, Elliott now receives $10,000 a year from Villanova. When he first started coaching, as an *continued*

to money-making—visiting the heavy-equipment yards of Elliott and Frantz, Inc. with his son, James Jr.—and wind it up at Villanova, clocking his runners.

Elliott's current stars include Korir (leftmost of the standees) and Paige (kneeling to Jumbo's left)

undergraduate scholarship quarter-miler in 1934, he, of course, did not receive a paycheck. (He also coached the golf team as an undergrad because "there was nobody to do that, either.") After graduation his salary was established at $200 for six months of coaching—indoor and outdoor track and golf. "You've got to remember that this was only something I was doing after work," Jumbo points out.

After World War II, in which Elliott became a lieutenant commander in the Navy, his fee leaped to $2,500. For this he coached track, golf and cross-country and served as the trainer for the Villanova football team. "I got by fine," he says. "I'd found that in the heavy-construction business a lot of managers were in their offices at 6:30, 7 in the morning. By starting early I could make four good calls before the average salesman even got on the road. My territory was the Main Line, with two or three accounts in the city—nothing farther than 25 miles from Villanova. I never had any trouble making it to school by three in the afternoon."

In the late '40s the young businessman's track teams began to be noticed. Jumbo's first stars were George Guida and Browning Ross, both of whom qualified for the 1948 Olympics—Guida in the 400, Ross in the steeplechase. In 1950 Elliott coached a witty, balding youth named Fred Dwyer, now the track coach at Manhattan College in New York, who ran a 4:00.8 mile. In 1954 Jumbo coached his first black runner, Jenkins—who would win two gold medals (4 x 400 relay and 400) at the 1956 Olympics while only a sophomore at Villanova.

A dynasty was beginning, and Elliott decided it was time to look for on-the-job help. He went to the university to see about hiring an assistant. Money, as always, stood in the way. Undaunted, Jumbo went out and hired an assistant coach at $5,000 a year, double his own salary. The assistant, Jim Tuppeny, later became track coach at Penn. "I was making big goddamn bucks selling, then," Jumbo explains. "So I just paid the assistant myself. It was a tax write-off, nothing."

Finally, in 1969, the university, perhaps out of embarrassment at having what was probably the lowest-paid major-power track coach in the nation, demanded that Elliott accept a salary of $10,000. The move was made largely to set a precedent. "In case," as Jumbo puts it, "they might have to hire another coach after I'm gone."

But Elliott did not need, or particularly want, the extra cash. As an officer of the Villanova Development Council he promptly gave all (much more than all, is the rumor) of the raise back to the school. "If I ever had to quit coaching it would tear my heart out," he says. "I like people. I love track men. Obviously, I didn't get into it for the money."

It is this generosity toward his alma mater that annoys some of the other coaches. "The man has a name like Lombardi in football," groans Frank Sevigne, the track coach at the University of Nebraska. "But what's really so irritating is that Jumbo is that successful, and it's only *part time*."

Jumbo walks down the hall of the aging Villanova field house, one of those drafty brick and tile structures that undoubtedly looked modern back when basketball players wore high-tops and the running one-hander was considered radical. Clad in a three-piece business suit, white shirt, dark tie and black wingtips, he is himself a throwback to another, less jivey era. Medallions, flowered disco shirts and leisure suits will remain the province of other, hipper coaches. Elliott, the old-school Irish Catholic, believes in dignity as he knows it. "Do you remember how John Wooden used to coach at UCLA?" he asks. "Every now and then he'd stand up, and once or twice he'd say something. I understand that. These new coaches—particularly in basketball—my God, they're madmen."

At times—such as when he is standing still, deep in thought—Jumbo looks older than he is, somewhat pale and fragile. But his speedy, long-limbed gait is an indication that youth still lurks within. Split high, like a good hurdler or quarter-miler (he ran a 47.4 in 1935 and probably would have made the 1936 Olympic team except for an injury), the 5′ 11″, 160-pound Elliott claims it is "the working with the lads" that keeps him young. "I know men in their 60s who are so old I don't even want to be around them," he says. For the last decade or so recruiters from other colleges have warned high school athletes that if they went to Villanova they would end up running for a different coach, the implication being that Elliott was due for retirement. But Father Driscoll has said Jumbo can coach "as long as he wants."

"Those retirement stories," says Jumbo, shrugging. "I've heard them every spring for 20 years. All I can say is, retire to what—a hole in the ground?"

Even the crowded, dingy confines of

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the field house (it is not a field house in the true sense of the word since there is no indoor track or field area; Villanova's wooden "indoor" track is outside) seem to put life into Elliott's stride. "People jog all through this building," he says. "The other day I was coming out of the men's room and some great big guy hit me and knocked me flying. This has to be the best-used facility in the world."

He says this with amusement and pride. For years he has asked the university for a new track, perhaps even a real locker room (the dressing room is also a hallway), but it's not imperative that he get them. The contrast between Villanova's archaic athletic facilities and the success of his teams appeals to Jumbo's sense of humor and his up-by-the-bootstraps philosophy. Visitors usually ask what his teams do when snow blankets the "indoor" track. "We just give the boys shovels and put them to work," he replies. "It's good for them."

In his office, which he shares with two assistant coaches, Jack Pyrah and Elliott Baker, Jumbo stretches out and puts his feet up on his desk. Pyrah and Baker are also part-time coaches, having full-time jobs elsewhere—Pyrah with the university, Baker in the Philadelphia school system. Jumbo looks over his head to where a large brown stain has discolored the ceiling. He stares at it a while, pondering its significance.

"What's that?" he asks.

The room, which invariably gets crowded once Jumbo arrives, now includes all three coaches, student manager Ray Engler (dispensing the mint candy that Jumbo calls "vitamins"), a secretary, several Villanova runners and two at-large students who have wandered in to use the phone.

"It's a leak," says Baker. "Relax, Jumbo, we'll get it fixed." Behind his hand he adds, "Next year."

The talk is loud and lively. Jumbo thrives on talk, in pubs, restaurants, arenas, everywhere. "Mr. Elliott will not go to lunch by himself," says Paige, his latest star. "If he hasn't found anybody to go with him by noon, he'll come over to campus and grab an athlete and say, 'Come on, let's eat.' "

Freshman sprinter Carlton Young, who is nursing a muscle pull, enters the chaos and, finding all the chairs taken, lies down on Jumbo's desk to talk with the coach about schoolwork. Considered one of the best young runners in the nation—he had a 9.4 100 and a 20.9 220 as a Philadelphia high school junior—Young is also a top student, with a first-semester 3.9 average in pre-med courses. Though it might appear otherwise, there is nothing disrespectful about Young's posture. It reflects expediency, informality and friendship, all of which Jumbo understands and advocates.

The office is chockablock with trophies and plaques—on window ledges, on the

A Jumbo pantheon: George Guida '49, 440 yards; Fred Dwyer '54, mile, '58 mile-relay team of Charley Jenkins, Ron Delany, Ed Collymore, Charles Stead

walls, under papers, piled up, buried, forgotten. Jumbo is asked if these comprise all the Villanova track trophies. "God, no," he cries in mock chagrin. "They're all over campus. I don't know how many of them there are. Too many." One recent night Jumbo returned home and was greeted by his 85-year-old uncle, Lou, who lives with Jumbo's family in nearby Haverford. "Here, Jim, look what I found in the basement," Lou said, holding up a tarnished metal plaque proclaiming Ron Delany to be a member of eight winning Penn Relays teams.

"Where the hell did you find that!" cried Jumbo, pretending to back up, as if Villanova's victory hardware were pursuing him, even perhaps multiplying like seedpods gone wild somewhere in his cellar.

Not for a minute, however, should anyone believe that Jumbo Elliott doesn't like to win. He loves to clown around. "They fired that Arizona *continued*

Vaulter Don Bragg '57 won an Olympic gold in '60

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football coach for slapping a kid's helmet," he says one day in the office to Pyrah, who is busy on the phone, "but can they fire you for slugging an assistant coach? For beating on this fat S.O.B.?" And Jumbo pummels Pyrah's midsection while the beleaguered assistant, still talking on the phone, struggles for calm. But his concern for his runners and their victories is not so lighthearted.

He prides himself on doing what's best for his boys and, more often than not, that means getting them home in first place. He'll fight for those wins. In 1970 Villanova won the NCAA Cross-Country Championships by one point over Oregon after an irate Elliott used film to prove that one of his runners finished 62nd, not 67th, as the officials had ruled. Near the end of the 1978 IC4A Outdoor Championships, Jumbo realized that Villanova could win the meet if his runners finished 1-2-3-4 in the 1,500 (an unprecedented feat), finished first in the 5,000, and then won the 4 x 400 relay, the final event. Jumbo made some lineup changes, explained the situation to his boys, and Villanova beat Maryland 99–98 for the title.

Believing that hard work followed by just reward builds character, Elliott worries now about his boys not being able to participate in the 1980 Olympics. He figures he has a dozen former or current athletes who could qualify for the Moscow Games. "But it hasn't changed anything for me, really," Jumbo adds. "I'll still try to get the boys in the best shape I can."

This approach is shared, as one would expect, by Elliott's athletes. "It's not going to kill me if the United States doesn't compete," says Paige. "There are a lot of meets in Europe after the Olympics and everybody will be at those. If you can beat an Olympic medalist then, well, that's not too bad."

One afternoon not long ago, Jumbo watched Maree run some stretch-out laps. Maree wouldn't be going to the Olympics regardless of a boycott—South Africa is banned because of its apartheid policy—nor is he allowed to compete in international meets or in any meets in which foreigners not enrolled in U.S. schools are involved. The tragic irony is that Maree is black.

Last season Maree ran several of the best middle-distance times in the world. He would like to become a U.S. citizen, but to be eligible he must reside in this country five years and he has been here only three. For an athlete whose skills could peak at any moment, two years is a long time to wait. Barring an Act of Congress or a change in South Africa's racial policies, that is what he must do. "It breaks me in a way," Maree has said. "But it builds me in a way. I'm able to take punishment."

Jumbo steps onto the splintering board track. A few hundred yards away is Goodreau Stadium, in which the school's

Frank Murphy '69 (left) and Dave Patrick '68 ran middle distances; Dick Buerkle '70 held indoor mile record; Larry James '70, silver medalist in '68 Olympics.

"Jeremiah and me wuz surveying together for 2 months. He never said a word. That's what I call good company."

Pappy McCoy, Railroad Surveyor, Chicago & Ouray Railroad

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quarter-mile outdoor track is situated. In a time when many high schools have expensive all-weather tracks, the one at Goodreau is still cinders.

Villanova doesn't belong to a conference in track and has no dual meets, so its inadequate facilities are not as great a liability as they might seem. Indeed, they are of virtually no concern to the middle- and long-distance men. "Facilities just aren't that important," says Liquori. "A miler can run anywhere. Kenyans get by without any tracks whatsoever."

It's harder on the field men, of course, which is why Villanova usually does poorly in those events. "When Don Bragg was here, we had a sawdust pole-vault pit that used to freeze solid in the winter," says Jumbo. "Bragg used to get a shovel and chop it up so he could jump. Of course, you don't get many kids like Bragg anymore."

Which probably is all right with Elliott. Some speculate that it was because of the excitable Bragg—who gave Tarzan yells before he charged down the runway and, according to Jumbo, could eat "fifteen barbecued chickens and outarm-wrestle any football player at Villanova"—that Elliott began concentrating on runners. At any rate, Baker now handles the field men.

Jumbo watches as Maree circles the track. The troubled young man is a patterned, precise runner. If a glass of ice cubes were placed on his head there wouldn't be a clink as he glided down the straightaways. Still, Jumbo sees flaws.

"Hey, Syd, twist your arms just a little on the turns," he yells.

Maree circles the track again.

"Like this?" he yells, without moving his head or changing expression.

"Yeah! Good!" cries Jumbo as the dark figure runs on.

People in the track world are always asking for the secret of Elliott's coaching success. In fact, his training concepts are simple and mundane—too basic for those who desire an exotic formula. "Run, eat, sleep," says Jumbo. Liquori says, "At clinics, people can't believe he's being truthful. But he is."

Elliott doesn't care for fancy, "scientific" approaches to the sport. "I don't measure lung capacity or any of that stuff," he says. "What can *I* do about it? The only special technique I have is my own personal psychology. I stress the efficient operation of body movement, and I have my runners do a lot of repeat work—repeat quarters or 220s or halves. But each person is different. If you have a runner as naturally gifted as, say, that hurdler, Nehemiah, the way you coach him is to not foul him up. Mostly you try to keep the boys' frames of mind up."

Jumbo's vast experience—the fact that he has seen it all—comes into play here. He knows when to push a runner and when to lay off. This is the psych business, closing the sale. "A

continued

Marty Liquori '71 held the outdoor mile record, Eamonn Coghlan '76 holds the indoor mile record, Mark Belger '78 holds U.S. 880 indoor record.

typical coach will say, 'Give me 15 repeat quarters in 60 seconds,' " says Liquori. "And of course nobody can do it, so afterward you feel down. Jumbo, on the other hand, will say, 'O.K., we're doing 10 quarters in 60 today.' Everybody does it and they say, 'Hey, let's do more.' Jumbo will say, 'No, go on in,' but maybe one day he'll say, 'O.K., give me two more,' and everybody will do those two and go in feeling great, like world-beaters. He'll do things like that, sacrifice a little physical conditioning for mental conditioning."

One thing Elliott tries not to do is to get greedy, push runners into places where they don't belong. For two years he had Mark Belger, a 1978 graduate, and Paige on his team at the same time. Both were world-class half-milers, yet he never ran them head to head. "Why force the issue?" he says, knowing that a loss by either one might have been ruinous to that runner's development.

"It's like my business," says Jumbo. "Sometimes I'll talk to a manager who isn't being straight with me, who says yes, definitely, he wants to buy one of our tractors. Then I'll go back to finish the deal, and he says he went out and bought a Caterpillar instead. I don't force the issue. I keep myself from getting mad. I say, 'I hope it works out real well for you.' You have to think about the long run."

"The thing I remember most about Jumbo's practices is that they were a lot of fun," says Dwyer, who as a rival coach is still one of Elliott's good friends. "Jumbo used to stutter a little, and in practice I'd be on my way to a 60-second lap in the mile and he'd want me to slow down or sprint and he'd call out, 'Si-si-si. . . .' I'd stop and say, 'Si-si-si what?' And then he'd chase me around the track. You need light moments like that, because running itself requires so much discipline."

Elliott has always understood the need for occasional levity, in life as well as running. One of his catch phrases is "stop and smell the roses." He once advised the intense Liquori to spend 20 minutes a day smiling into a mirror.

Of course, a major reason for Elliott's success is the sheer amount of rare talent he has brought to Villanova, getting the great ones and letting them help each other. "Practices were always like races," recalls James. Elliott admits that track recruiting is simple: "You just look for the best times." For a man of Jumbo's stature, getting the blue-chippers to enroll is a breeze, too. "Well, let me say that it's much easier than selling a quarter-million-dollar truck to a man who doesn't want one," he says.

In the last two decades, Elliott remembers only one Villanova track man flunking out, and none has transferred to another school. He doesn't try to recruit athletes from the South or the West because he knows they won't enjoy the Pennsylvania winters. "I want my runners to be happy," he says.

However, foreign students from a variety of climes have seemed happy enough at Villanova. Ever since Guida and Ross met quarter-miler Jim Reardon at the 1948 Olympics and persuaded him to attend the school, Villanova has had a link with the best Irish runners. The Africans go to Villanova because of the school's international reputation.

"You know, I didn't make a single phone call to South Africa to get Maree," says Jumbo. "He was in the U.S. the summer after high school and his sponsor suggested Villanova to him, and the next thing I knew, he was here."

Once at Villanova, regardless of race or nationality, no runner can fail to respond to Elliott's genius for perfect timing and shrewd motivation. Nobody gets athletes up for meets like Jumbo.

As a freshman James was a frustrated intermediate hurdler. His steps were inconsistent and his concentration was poor. When he was a sophomore, Elliott had him training for the 600 as well as the hurdles, which only compounded his dissatisfaction. Then, just before that year's NCAA Indoor Championships, Jumbo approached him and said, "Forget it, champ. You're running the 440."

"He made me so happy I could have kissed his feet," recalls James. "I exploded from those blocks." Even though running from the outside lane, James shattered Theron Lewis' national record by nearly a second. His NCAA-record 47 flat, set 12 years ago, still stands.

Elliott also stresses discipline. Not the boot-camp discipline of a Woody Hayes, but the conservative discipline of a businessman. "They need some," Jumbo says, "for the years after school, when they have to submit to the whims of a boss."

"He likes you to have that nice clean 'American' look," says senior Keith Brown, a black sprinter from the Baltimore ghetto. "I like a 'stache-and-'burns look, but when I came in as a freshman, he said, 'Shave!' And no long socks or anything like that, either. I said, 'What!' But now I understand. He knows employers come to our meets, too, and he wants us to be respected as athletes *and* students."

When Jumbo is in doubt, he pauses and ponders. As he watched Delany set a world mile record 25 minutes after eating a hot dog, Jumbo realized there was a limit to his knowledge. "The great thing is, he knows there are things he doesn't know," is the way Paige puts it. That coachly humility may contribute to the fact that so many of Elliott's athletes continue to perform well once they are out of school.

"A lot of coaches want to be the guru," says Liquori. "But by the end of your sophomore or junior year Jumbo expects you to be able to coach yourself. And you can. European and Communist coaches can't believe that people like Eamonn and I actually coach ourselves."

There is a certain uniformity, a sedate, genteel quality about virtually all of Elliott's athletes, past and present, as though the navy blue and white Villanova track uniforms are the pupal stages of Brooks Brothers suits. In exciting times one could almost call it a dullness. But that would imply that the athletes lack intelligence or enthusiasm, which isn't true, either. Villanova runners can be wild and crazy guys when the mood strikes them. Paige, who lists "girls" as his favorite hobby, recalls that when he was being recruited, Jumbo had to leave for a while to bail some of his track men out of jail, where they had been immured for some minor offense.

"Everybody has Mr. Elliott's phone number memorized or in his wallet," says Paige. "He always says, 'If you get thrown in jail, call me first.' "

Overall, though, Jumbo's athletes are

continued

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quality people who do well. The track team's grades are always above the Villanova average, and Villanova is a strong school academically. The list of former runners who are now successful lawyers, doctors and businessmen is impressive. "That is something the mothers who send their kids to school think about," says Liquori, now the president of a large athletic-store chain.

In truth, Elliott has merely been molding men in his own image. His father, who read meters for a gas company, died when Jumbo was 3, leaving him to work his way up and out of Shantytown. "Nothing was given to me," he says. He still recalls the Depression days with dread. "Young people don't know what it was like," he says often. Even his track career started at the bottom. He ran his first quarter mile as a high school junior in 56 flat, and then was violently ill the rest of the day.

Elliott is conscious of money and material things, but primarily as markers, objects good to acquire and to have somewhere—like those damned trophies—but not to attach special meaning to. He'll show you his new white Continental Mark VI and his lovely three-fireplace, slate-roofed home and the blue Eldorado in the garage. But ask him how many rooms there are in the house and he says he has no idea.

Early in life Jumbo found his salvation—sales. "No matter what you do, life is selling," he says. "Selling yourself, selling a program, selling this, selling that." He brought the concept to track and it has paid off handsomely for him. Twice he was asked to coach at USC, a school with a lavish athletic budget, but he refused because he felt his salesmanship was better suited to Villanova. He has been there longer than any teacher, coach or dean. Three of his four children have graduated from Villanova. In 1977 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the school. He *is* Villanova track. Athletes perform for *him*.

Not that everything has always gone right for him. There were times in the turbulent late 1960s when his business approach did not go over well with some of the more activist athletes. But it seemed almost nobody over 30 was right then. There have been times when Jumbo hasn't completely understood some of his young men. One of those was Bragg, who set a world record in the pole vault and then went to Hollywood to try out for Tarzan. Bragg didn't get the part, and Elliott didn't understand his ambition, although he was well aware of it.

"When did I first realize Bragg was interested in Tarzan?" says Jumbo. "Well, the day we recruited him he was in his backyard in New Jersey with a lot of ropes up, swinging from tree to tree. I guess that was a good indication."

The only goal that has eluded Elliott is the post of head U.S. Olympic track and field coach. Several times he seemed likely to get it, but was passed by. "Politics," Jumbo says.

But for the most part, nary a cloud worth mentioning shadows the sweet, structured life of Jumbo Elliott. At track meets he usually sits up in the stands, sometimes with his wife and children, sometimes reading a golf magazine, mentally sharpening his swing. He knows everybody, and young coaches and runners continually stop by to chat. "Jumbo is more than a coach," says Father Driscoll. "He's an educator."

At the U.S. Olympic Invitational at Madison Square Garden in late January, Jumbo sat quietly in the first deck of seats with a group of friends. Like the other spectators, he became more animated as the time for the 1,000-meter run, featuring Paige and Belger, approached. The two had met only once before, in a 1,000-yard race in last year's Millrose Games. Paige won, setting his world record.

"They may be the two best indoor runners ever at this event," Jumbo said. "You have mixed emotions but, of course, you're for the kid you've got now."

As the race began, both Paige and Belger hung back; then they surged ahead with two laps to go. Belger kicked, but Paige kicked harder and came home first in 2:21.6, .4 second ahead of his former teammate. Jumbo smiled. It was a nice race. Jumbo likes nice races, particularly those with slam-bang, come-from-behind finishes—especially those that involve relays, groups of runners, the whole Villanova team. Such a feast occurred at last year's NCAA Indoor Championships in Detroit.

Twenty-fifth in the team standings with only two points after the first day of competition, Villanova began to make its move with six events to go on the second and final day. Tufariello won the 600, the Villanova distance medley team placed third, Paige won the 1,000. Then, in the mile, Maree and Korir finished second and third behind meet-leading UTEP's Suleiman Nyambui. But their combined 14 points were five more than UTEP got for Suleiman's first. With only the mile relay to go, it was apparent that if Villanova won that event, the Wildcats would win by a point.

Jumbo, sitting on a folding chair outside one of the turns, did not gather his mile-relay team together for a pep talk. There wasn't time and, besides, he seldom does that anyway. The last time he had called a team meeting it was for an entirely different reason. "He told some jokes, and then he got serious," recalls Paige. "First he said, 'Why don't you guys smile more?' Then he told us to please say 'yes' or 'yessir' instead of 'yeah.' "

The relay team held a meeting of its own, at which there was a brief, silent prayer, and then won the race by half a second.

The four relay runners whooped and hollered, but in a subdued way. One by one they came over to Jumbo, shook his hand and said, "Congratulations, Mr. Elliott." Jumbo, perhaps wondering where to put yet another trophy, was outwardly subdued, too, but his eyes were damp.

Les Wallack, the Rutgers track coach, tells this story: "There was an incident last year during the indoor season, not long before that same NCAA meet. A quarter-miler—I won't mention his name or his school—beat Villanova in a relay, and as he crossed the finish line he made an obscene gesture at Tim Dale, the Villanova anchor man. Tim said nothing, just walked away. Then at the IC4As it was reversed. Villanova beat the other team easily. After the race, the Villanova guys said nothing to the other kid. They hugged each other for a moment—you could see how happy they were—and then they just walked away. Wow, it gave me chills. What class." END

FOR THE RECORD

A roundup of week Feb. 25-March 2

Compiled by BROOKS CLARK

BASKETBALL—Kansas City is two games ahead of Milwaukee in the Midwest, but one wouldn't have known it from the result of their encounter early in the week. The Bucks won 94–72, holding the Kings to fewer points than any NBA team has scored all season. "I guess we missed our wake-up call," said K.C. Coach Cotton Fitzsimmons. The Kings then got back in form with victories over Golden State 117–99 and San Diego 98–93. Milwaukee went on for three more wins. In a 122–88 win over the Clippers, rookie Pat Cummings had 25 points, a career high, and nine rebounds. In a 119–110 overtime triumph in Phoenix, Buck Junior Bridgeman scored 35. The final Milwaukee win came by a score of 126–117 at Los Angeles, also in overtime. Despite that loss, the Lakers took a half game lead over Seattle in the Pacific Division by defeating Houston 112–100 and the Sonics 131–108. In the Atlantic Division, Boston remained 1½ games ahead of Philadelphia, as both teams were unbeaten. The Celtics overcame the Hawks 108–97, the Spurs 130–125 as Larry Bird scored 30 points and the Warriors 110–99 as Bird went for 28 more. Three 76er victories came on the road. Julius Erving had 29 points at Golden State, including two free throws with 38 seconds remaining to clinch a 103–100 win. In Portland Dr. J scored 29 in the 98–96 win. After beating Seattle 101–98 in overtime, Philadelphia finished the week at home with another narrow victory, 104–103 over Denver, as Nugget Alex English's desperation hook shot fell through *after* the buzzer. Atlanta moved seven games up on Houston and San Antonio in the Central Division after a 108–97 loss to Boston and wins over Indiana 116–111 and Cleveland 111–103.

WBL. New York (24–7) clinched the Eastern Division title with a 135–92 win over Dallas, while Minnesota (18–9, *page 32*) and Houston (17–13) each need a victory to clinch championships in the Midwestern and Western divisions respectively. With 32 points in a 102–76 Iowa triumph over Milwaukee, Cornet Guard Molly Bolin, who has a 32.5-point scoring average, overtook San Francisco's Liz Silcott for the league scoring lead.

BOWLING—PALMER FALLGREN defeated Marshall Holman 211–196 to win a $125,000 PBA tournament in Miami.

BOXING—HILMER KENTY won the WBA lightweight crown by knocking out defending champion Ernesto España in the ninth round of a scheduled 15-round fight in Detroit.

GOLF—DAVE EICHELBERGER shot a five-under-par 279 to win the $300,000 Bay Hill Classic in Orlando, Fla. by three strokes over Leonard Thompson.

JAN STEPHENSON had a 13-under-par 275 and finished one stroke better than M.J. Smith to win the $100,000 Sun City (Ariz.) Classic.

HOCKEY—Yesterday's heroes became today's pros as seven former U.S. Olympians signed with the NHL (*page 14*). But the captain of the Lake Placid team, Mike Eruzione, says he will not pursue an NHL career. "What more can I do in hockey? To me, the gold medal is just the greatest thing that can happen to an individual. I'm going out on top." At the other end of the time line, Hartford signed a playmate for 51-year-old Gordie Howe, Bobby Hull, 41. Howe celebrated Hull's arrival with his 800th NHL goal as the Whalers, 13th in the league standings with 58 points, beat St. Louis 3–0. Philadelphia, first with 97 points, tied its only games, 3–3 with Toronto and 1–1 with Buffalo. The Sabres, in second place with 87 points, had lost to Chicago 3–1 and went on to beat Edmonton 4–2 as Defenseman Richard Dunn scored twice. Third-place Boston also beat the Oilers 4–2, and then triumphed at Hartford 6–3 on a hat trick and an assist by Center Peter McNab. The Bruins then lost 5–2 to the Rangers. Montreal, fourth with 80 points, was unbeaten on the week with a tie at Atlanta 3–3, and 6–3 victories over Minnesota and Washington. In the battle for the 16th and final playoff spot, Vancouver sent Edmonton to its sixth loss in seven games, 5–2, to close within a point of the Oilers and Nordiques, who are tied for 16th with 52 points.

HORSE RACING—PRIVATE ACCOUNT ($3.40), ridden by Jeff Fell, beat Lot O' Gold by a nose to win the $151,500 Widener Handicap at Hialeah. The 4-year-old ran the 1¼ miles in 2:03⅗.

SPECTACULAR BID ($2.60), Bill Shoemaker up, won the $350,000 Santa Anita Handicap by five lengths over Flying Paster. Bid covered the 1¼ miles in 2:00⅖.

MOTOR SPORTS—RENE ARNOUX, driving a 1.5-liter turbocharged Renault at an average speed of 123.265 mph, won the South African Grand Prix on the 2.55-mile Kyalami circuit near Johannesburg for his second Formula 1 victory of the year. He finished more than 30 seconds ahead of Jacques Laffite and Didier Pironi, who were driving Ligier-Fords.

TENNIS—JOHN McENROE defeated Jimmy Connors 7–6, 7–6 to win the $250,000 U.S. National Indoor tennis championship in Memphis.

BILLIE JEAN KING defeated Martina Navratilova 6–1, 6–3 to win a $150,000 tournament in Houston.

MILEPOSTS—FINED AND SUSPENDED. By the NHL, Philadelphia Flyer Coach PAT QUINN, $1,000 and three games for igniting the bench-clearing part of a brawl on Feb. 22 in Vancouver.

FIRED. As basketball coach at the University of Nevada-Reno, JIM CAREY, 51, who had a 65–46 record in four seasons at Reno. The Wolf Pack was 10–19 under him this season.

As coach of the San Antonio Spurs, DOUG MOE 41, who had a 177–135 record and had won two NBA division titles in three seasons with San Antonio. The Spurs were 33–33 under Moe this season.

INDICTED. By a grand jury in Broward County, Fla., six former players and four bettors—including members of the so-called Miami Syndicate PAUL COMMONAS, JAMES SOBIE and BERT IRA CASKILL (SI, June 11, 1979)—on charges of fixing matches at the Dania Jai Alai fronton.

SIGNED. By the Washington Diplomats, Midfielder JOHAN CRUYFF, 32, to a three-year contract for a reported $1.5 million. The Diplomats reportedly paid $1 million to the Los Angeles Aztecs for the rights to Cruyff.

As basketball coach at Florida, NORM SLOAN, 53, to a five-year contract worth $45,000 annually. Sloan, whose career record is 477–263, has coached at Presbyterian (1951-55), The Citadel (1956-60), Florida (1960-66) and North Carolina State (1966-80). He guided the Wolfpack to the NCAA title in 1974.

DIED. EMMETT ASHFORD, 65, the first black umpire in the major leagues, of a heart attack in Marina Del Rey, Calif. Ashford worked in the American League from 1966 through 1970.

CREDITS

10, 11—Andy Hayt. **12**—Rich Clarkson. **13**—Andy Hayt. **17**—Tony Triolo. **18, 19**—Carl Iwasak. **20**—Fred Kaplan (top), Carl Iwasak. **27**—Manny Millan. **28, 29**—R.J. Capak (top), Manny Millan. **43**—Rod Hanna. **50**—Harrison Funk. **54**—Manny Millan. **64-67**—George Tiedemann. **68**—Lane Stewart. **70, 71**—(left to right) Jules Schick, AP, Elahu Attar, AP. **72, 73**—(left to right) Eric Schwekardt, Jerry Cooke, James Drake, Art Shay, James Drake, Art Shay. **78**—Will Goddard, Sal & Cynthia Lombardo.

FACES IN THE CROWD

JOHN HARJU
TWO HARBORS, MINN.

Harju, a 23-year-old carpenter, won the first Wilderness Trek cross-country ski race at Ely, Minn., over a field of 73. He skied the 46-kilometer course in 2:49.42, beating second-place finisher Brent Smith of Cloquet, Minn., by eight minutes.

DON STAHL
DUBBERLY, LA.

Stahl, 42, coached the Sibley High basketball team to its 71st win in a row, a 75–38 triumph over Quitman High, to break the state high school record for consecutive victories (70). The Raiders have since run their streak to 80.

SUSAN FINNEY
MONTCLAIR, N.J.

Susan, 12, a right wing and one of only three girls in the 11-team Montclair ice hockey club junior program, scored a league-record eight goals and three assists in one game for the Rangers. She leads her age group with three goals per game.

DON McALLISTER
BROOKLYN

McAllister, a 6′ 7″ center at Hartwick College in Oneonta, N.Y., hit 28 straight shots over a six-game stretch to set an NCAA record. In his streak he made 13 layups, three hook shots and 12 jumpers from as far as 18 feet from the basket.

ALEX AGUERA
CLEARWATER, FLA.

Aguera, 18, a windsurfing instructor, finished first in the closed-course and slalom events in the middleweight division to win the men's overall title at the 1980 national midwinter championships off the John Pennekamp state park in Key Largo, Fla.

JENNY KLITCH
GRANDVIEW HEIGHTS, OHIO

Jenny, a ninth-grader at Grandview Heights High, beat Amy Brown 6–0, 6–2 to become the youngest player (14) to win the Ohio A-AA high school girls' tennis title. Her father, Richard, won the boys' tennis championship in 1951.

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19TH HOLE THE READERS TAKE OVER

THE GAMES

Sir:

And on the Eighth Day, God created the U.S. Olympic hockey team.

CARL NIXON
Barberton, Ohio

Sir:

U!S!A! . U!S!A! . U!S!A!

DON SCHULTZ
Reston, Va.

Sir

After reviewing the bathing-suit edition of SI, we've decided to demand equal time. We want pictures of the U.S. hockey team in their shorts!

Eagerly awaiting,

LEHMAN, 4TH FLOOR
Williams College
Williamstown, Mass.

Sir

The Boys of Winter proved themselves to be the Men of America.

CHARLIE DICKEY
Scottsdale, Ariz.

Sir:

Take heed, National Hockey League. What thousands of potential hockey fans now want to see at an NHL game is the same type of good, clean hockey that they saw, perhaps for the very first time, at the 1980 Winter Olympics.

Clean up your act, NHL, and maybe you, too, can win the hearts of your countrymen.

PAUL NACHTRAB
Longmont, Colo.

Sir

What a beautiful sight it was to see the U.S. Olympic hockey team captain, Mike Eruzione, gold medal around his neck, his head high, his hand over his heart, singing the national anthem at the award ceremonies! To me that's what the Olympic spirit is all about.

ALLEN C. DEMMIN
Middleton, Wis.

Sir:

I have just reread *Of Gold and Gophers* by William Oscar Johnson (Dec. 10, 1979). That story showed uncanny foresight in regard to our Olympic gold-medal hockey team. When Winger Rob McClanahan—referring to the fans at the Washington Capitals game in Lake Placid in October—stated, "They *made* us do what we never believed we could do," he might have been thinking ahead to last month's chants of "U.S.A.! U.S.A.!" in the same arena.

And Coach Brooks' words in Johnson's story also strike home: "Passes come from the heart, not the stick." These 20 men reached down into theirs to reach out to ours, to turn the impossible into reality.

WAYNE D. CALLAHAN
Lowville, N.Y.

Sir

The loudest Bravo! of the afternoon at the City Opera's Feb. 24 matinee of *La Traviata* was not for a stunning aria. It followed the announcement that the U.S. Olympic hockey team had just defeated Finland. Thanks, guys, for a virtuoso performance.

LISA MARTINO
New York City

Sir:

With the aura of nationalism still lingering in the air of Lake Placid, now might be as good a time as any to nail another spike in the Olympic coffin. Whereas the original Greek Games did much to transcend the narrow politics of the city-states, our present-day version of the Olympics does, in fact, do quite the contrary. This may not be a problem in the future because, as many predict, the Games could die in Moscow. In such case, the resurgence of the Olympics could be a long time coming, the world community has quite a bit of growing up to do before true Olympian ideals become world realities.

STEVEN C. WILLIAMS
Cypress, Calif.

Sir:

We are only two months into 1980 and the book is already closed on the selection of Sportsmen of the Year. Nothing will top the performance and class of the U.S. Olympic hockey team.

ROBERT E. KINGSBURY
Medford, N.J.

Sir:

There's no Heiden it. Eric is Sportsman of the Year.

JEFFREY M. FISHER
Lakewood, Ohio

Sir.

Sportsmen of the Year, a tie: Superman Eric Heiden and Superteam, the U.S. Olympic hockey team.

CHARLES R. DICKERSON
Roanoke, Va.

Sir:

Bob Ottum's *The Rise and the Fall* (Feb. 25) was one of the most sensitive stories ever published in SPORTS ILLUSTRATED. To find words for the sadness we all felt for Randy and Tai had to be a difficult task.

RICHARD W. BLAIR
Atlanta

Sir:

Mr. Ottum describes the Russian pair as skating perfectly and flawlessly, but your picture of the two on page 35 contradicts this statement. Notice Zaitsev's hand as he hoists Rodnina. It rests on her thigh, while the rule states it cannot be on the leg.

GENE M. WRONKO
Lyndhurst, N.J.

Sir

I hope Tai and Randy realize that their work, discipline and stress have not gone for naught. To those of us who love skating in its purest form, they cannot be surpassed.

MRS. JOHN S. RENOUARD
Garden City, N.Y.

THE BIRDS

Sir

Ron Rau's exposé (*Valley of the Eagles*, Feb. 25) of the plight of our national bird points out the self-serving attitude of too many Americans. It is truly unfortunate that the residents of Haines and the rest of us find it so difficult to take off our economic and political blinders when dealing with the environment.

ANDREW HAMILTON
Lawrence, Kans.

Sir

The national bird must remain an eagle for the same reason the word heart must remain in all those memorable love songs. Surely, I didn't leave my *liver* in San Francisco. By the same line of reasoning, imagine the first man on the moon saying, "The *Turkey* has landed."

C. LUSCO
Baltimore

SWIMSUITS (CONT.)

Sir.

As a psychiatrist interested in sports and sports-related phenomena, I have long been puzzled by your yearly midwinter bathing-suit issue. It wasn't apparent to me why a magazine devoted to sports coverage would so drastically change its format.

Then it became clear. The bathing-suit issue is your readers' halftime show, coming as it does between the Super Bowl and spring training, and midway through the basketball and hockey seasons.

Beautiful, scantily clad women parade through the issue like cheerleaders at a football game. By presenting a halftime show, you confirm the fact that reporting and reading about sports is an event so intense as to require a change of pace—a time-out.

RONALD L. KAMM, M.D.
Tinton Falls, N.J.

Address editorial mail to SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, Time & Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, New York, 10020

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